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HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

1789—1795.

Vol. IV.

HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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BOOK X.

THIRD PARTITION OF POLAND.

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FALL OF ROBESPIERRE.

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IF we once more survey the state of European politics in July 1794, we see the military power of France decidedly in the ascendant, and a general exhaustion, and disinclination for war, on the part of the allied Powers. England alone was victorious at sea, and still resolved to continue the contest. Prussia had placed her Rhine Army at the disposal of the British Government, but otherwise directed all her hopes and efforts towards the war in Poland. Holland, the petty German sovereigns, Naples and Spain, wished for nothing so eagerly as peace—peace at almost any price. And, lastly, Austria, the first and hitherto the most prominent adversary of France, had outstripped all other Powers

in favourable disposition towards the Republic. A formal negotiation had not yet indeed been opened; it was still uncertain how far consideration for his allies would allow the Emperor to go. But the views of the Austrian Government with regard to Poland, like those of Prussia, were completely settled, and were no secret even in Paris. Austria had gone so far as to abandon an important province of the Empire, for the twofold purpose of protecting herself against the dreaded enmity of Prussia, and rendering the Maritime Powers more favourable to a speedy conclusion of peace.

Under these circumstances nothing could be of greater consequence to Europe than the warlike or peaceful disposition of the French Rulers. Those, indeed, who only saw their public documents, felt obliged to resign all thoughts of peace. Never were warlike preparations carried on with more noisy vehemence, never had the rostra of the Convention resounded with wilder anathemas against "the crowned tyrants, the armed slaves of princes, the bands of royal robbers!" But behind this official bluster other sentiments prevailed. The desire for peace was felt, not only in the higher circles of society, which had always abhorred the war as the most potent lever of the Revolution; not only in the mass of the burghers, who saw trade and wealth daily vanishing away; not only among the peasant population, who were obliged to sacrifice the blood of their sons, and the fruits of their land, to the ever-increasing demands of the war; it was shared even by some of the revolutionary leaders themselves, and once more, as twelve months earlier, it became the cause of discord between parties in the Committee of Public Safety.

After the fall of Hebert and Danton, Robespierre had again become master of the political situation. His rival Collot d'Herbois had lost; in the catastrophe of March, all that had hitherto given him and his party an independent position—the influence of the Cordéliers, the support of the Parisian Municipality, and above all the possession of the War Ministry. It was for the especial purpose of destroying

for ever the power of the latter, that the Convention had decreed the dissolution of the Ministerial Council, and the formation of twelve Committees in its stead. The sphere of operations assigned to these was in many respects characteristic of the state of affairs. The first commission embraced the departments of police and law; the administration of justice had become, even in form, a mere appendage of the police. The second had the superintendence of public instruction—a task of no great difficulty at that time, because the depressed state of the finances of itself prevented all organisation in this department. The third attended to agriculture and the arts. We shall again have occasion to observe in the ruling system, at this period, the prevailing notion that true republicans ought properly to practise no art but that of husbandry. The fourth presided over commerce and the maintenance of the people, which latter, as we see, depended more on foreign imports than the produce of the French soil. The fifth took charge of the public works, the sixth of public grants in aid, the seventh of the postal arrangements—the last three being matters of absolute necessity, whose urgency was proved by the creation of these bureaus. Then came a Commission of national revenue, instituted merely to save appearances, since there were really no considerable sources of income but *assignats*, confiscations and requisitions.[1] Three more Commissions were intrusted with the defence of the country, and presided over the administration of the land forces, the navy, and the manufacture of arms and powder.

Robespierre reserved to himself exclusively the nomination of all these various boards. We still possess the lists of persons, written by the dictator himself,—rough drafts—short notices of the character of each person proposed for office—and the final appointments. Some he calls patriots of more

[1] Ramel *(Finances en l'an IX)* says that about 300 million francs a year were paid into the Treasury. These figures however are only given as approximately correct: the official *états*, which for this period are unfortunately very fragmentary, give a much lower sum.

or less talent; others are characterised as energetic, clever and honest men, capable of undertaking the most important functions, adapted for the highest offices. They are, without exception, obscure men who never at any time showed any political capacity. Hermann, late President of the Tribunal in Robespierre's native town of Arras, became Commissioner of police and justice. His assessor Lanne was an intimate friend of the deputy Lebas, who was on familiar terms with St. Just, and had married the daughter of the landlord of Robespierre's house. Buchot, a schoolmaster from the Jura, was lauded by the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and was thereupon named Commissioner of foreign affairs.[1] In the club at Pontarlier, a post-office official, named Lerebours, had a short time before had a violent discussion with a deputy who was passing through that place; Robespierre, being informed of this, sent for him to Paris, praised his energy, and appointed him President of the public relief bureau. The new Minister then attended daily upon Robespierre, and worked under his superintendence.[2] Other Commissioners had recommended themselves, as orators of the Jacobin Club, or as Members of the bloody tribunals of Lyons and Arras; it was remarked that one of the assessors of the agricultural Commission bore a guillotine on his seal. Of these appointments some were sanctioned on the 8th, and all definitively ratified by the Convention on the 18th of April, without any remark whatever.

A second, scarcely less important object, was to secure possession of Paris. To do this it was necessary to bring the Municipality—which had hitherto been the focus of every opposition—into subjection to the Government, for the first time since 1789. With this view the Committee of Public Safety arbitrarily decreed a remodelling of the city police; then purged the Sectional revolutionary committees of all obnoxious elements, and employed the now completely

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[1] *Memoires de Miot de Melito* I, 53. [2] Villiaumé, *Hist. de la Rev. Franc.* Vol. III. Note P.

cowed Jacobins in the work of closing and suppressing all other clubs and popular unions. The effect of these last acts of despotism was so strong, that all parties submitted without resistance, and unanimously agreed to the principle, that public opinion, like the Republic, must be one and indivisible. Whilst opposite opinions were thus deprived of every organ, the formation of the new Municipality was effected, like that of the Ministries, according to Robespierre's lists. Fleuriot, the enthusiastic admirer of the Dictator, was made Mayor of Paris, and a certain Payan, brother of the Commissioner of public instruction, a friend and partisan of St.-Just, became "National agent." Henriot and Boulanger were retained in the command of the National guard, both animated by the same wish of atoning for their previous Hebertist sins by double zeal in the Dictator's service.

And thus Paris, once so turbulent, was reduced to silence and mute obedience. No one in the Convention dared to utter a word against the all-powerful ruler. The provinces had learned from the examples of Lyons, Bourdeaux, and Toulon, the terrible consequences of exciting the wrath of the Jacobin government, and, with the exception of La Vendée, crouched in patient submission. In these quarters Robespierre only needed to direct his attention to the Government officials, and he zealously set to work to put an end to the lawlessness and confusion of the Hebertists, and the sluggish apathy and weakness of some of the Dantonists, which had caused him so much vexation. He had observed with displeasure how the public money was squandered, the pockets of the conventional Commissioners filled, and the people plundered by a number of unauthorised and self-constituted persons of the most worthless character. He thought it equally injurious to the commonwealth, that these disorders afforded an opportunity to a great number of aristocrats to make their escape; that revolutionary justice was often inclined towards indulgence by local and personal influences, and that the lawless clubs of the Departments only reflected the general tendencies, and did not carry out

every individual enactment of the central government. His opinion was, that all these manifestations of self-will must be controlled by a rigid centralisation of power, and an iron discipline. On the 15th of April, accordingly, St. Just laid before the Convention a comprehensive report on the police of the country. He described the disorganised state of the public finances arising from the paper money, the speculations of the Bourse, and the frequent embezzlements. He complained of the general impoverishment, the scarcity of provisions, and the annihilation of credit. It was necessary, he said, to strengthen the fabric of government, to rouse the servants of the State from their slumbers, to call them to a strict account for their negligence and brutality, and their indulgence to traitors and scoundrels. In accordance with these suggestions, it was decreed that the conspirators from every part of the country should be brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris, and, consequently, that all similar tribunals in the Departments should be dissolved, unless the Committee of Public Safety should see reason to think otherwise. Political justice was thus completely centralised, and subjected to the control of the Government. We know that under transparent forms, this court could dispose of the life and property of every citizen, and we shall soon see how carefully Robespierre watched and guided every step of the Parisian Tribunal. By the dissolution of the other courts, the individual views of the judge were completely eliminated from the system. It is true that the Parisian Tribunal was hereby overwhelmed with business, and that a danger arose of its coming to a speedy stand-still, which Robespierre would have regarded as the greatest misfortune, and, indeed, as the destruction of the strongest prop of his power. But St. Just's law of the 26th had already ordained the formation of six so-called Popular Commissions, for the trial of the incarcerated *suspects*, and these seemed capable of becoming the most convenient organs for the support of the Revolutionary Tribunal. These, therefore, were empowered to

examine the charges brought against the suspected persons, to liberate the innocent, and bring the others before the Tribunal. Besides this, they were themselves to pass judgment on all citizens, under sixty years of age, who lived without regular occupation, and had spoken against the Revolution; the latter were to be banished to Cayenne. The sphere of this new *haute police* was completed by an order, that all *quondam* nobles and foreigners should leave Paris, and the frontier towns and harbours, within three days.

The other provisions of the decree were directed against the government officials. All bureaux of administration were directed to make up the arrears of their accounts within three months. No one was to be guilty of any further transgression of his official functions. No Commissioner was for the future to delegate his power to a third person. No official, except the Commissioners for the maintenance of the People, and the Representatives attached to the armies, was empowered to make requisitions. The Committee of Public Safety, said the decree, would do everything to further commerce and trade. St. Just, too, had said in his report, "we must at last create civil institutions, which are the only secure foundation of the State, but of which no one has yet thought."

These last words were the first announcement of a system, by which Robespierre's government intended to distinguish itself from all its revolutionary predecessors. Hitherto the democratic rule had firmly fixed its talons in the outward life, the blood and treasure, of all Frenchmen. It had likewise persecuted certain political and religious tendencies with the greatest fury, and threatened every manifestation of them with immediate destruction. St. Just now promised to carry this system of government a step further. The design was, that the State should henceforward take possession of the minds of the people, as hitherto of their bodies, and distribute to mankind their thoughts and inclinations as well as material blessings. Independence and individuality in the inner life of man were no more to be

tolerated than in his material existence. In accordance with these views, St. Just distinguished between the laws which regulate external political and legal relations, and the institutions—*i. e.* the regulations intended to promote the moral and spiritual education of the people. These soon became the watchword of the new rulers, and they certainly proclaimed to the nation with perfect frankness, to what extent, and by what means, they intended to carry out their new spiritual lordship. On the 20th of April Billaud-Varennes brought forward a decree, in the name of the Committee, which was in fact nothing but a general programme. "The Convention decrees," it said, "that it will lead the democratic Republic to the most complete triumph, and annihilate all its enemies without mercy. The transition of a long-oppressed nation to democracy may be compared to the effort by which nature rose from nothingness to existence. It is necessary completely to refashion a people whom one wishes to make free—to destroy its prejudices, alter its habits, limit its necessities, eradicate its vices, and purify its desires. Strong forces, therefore, must be set in motion to develope the social virtues, and to repress the passions of men. The true Republic is such a blending of all wills, interests and talents, that each man may draw a share from the common fund corresponding to his stake and contribution. The State, therefore, must lay hold on every human being at his birth, and direct his education with a powerful hand. Solon's weak confidence threw Athens into fresh slavery, while Lycurgus's severity founded the Republic of Sparta on an immovable basis. This contrast," cried the orator "comprehends the whole art of government."

The design of the rulers, therefore, was, by every means in their power, to cast the great body of the citizens in a new mould of life, morals, and religion; not to form the State according to the necessities of mankind, but to force the will of men into the model of the new government. The mere mention of this scheme awakens in every unprejudiced mind a feeling of natural repugnance at such an arbitrary

and fanatical despotism. Yet it is essential to get a clear understanding of the grounds on which our judgment of it rests. There is, after all, in St. Just's syllogisms, as in all great political errors, an element of truth. No form of government can he permanent which is not based on corresponding moral tendencies in the people itself. The State, therefore, is doubtless justified in the endeavour to direct and elevate these tendencies, by which it is itself so greatly influenced. This is the evident duty of every good citizen, and it would be absurd to exclude the most prominent members of the body politic from the exercise of this highest function. Nay, so deeply is this close relation between politics and morality founded in our nature, that the State which loses sight of it for a single moment, must inevitably fall into lifeless decomposition. But when the State thus claims the office of educating the people, it must never forget, that education means, not the subjection, but the liberation, of the mind of every individual. Religion and morality are only worthy of their names, in so far as they are continually reproduced from the inward sentiments and convictions of every individual heart. Every penal enactment in this department of human existence is a deathstroke to the life of a nation. The morality which is produced by terror is as worthless as the religion which is fortified by the stake; both are chilled by such means into mere lip service, in which they themselves must perish, and leave to the enslaved people the choice between suffocation and rebellion. It was in this way that the universal dominion of the Popes cut its own roots, in the 13th century, by the tribunals of the Inquisition, and drove the moral forces of Europe into non-ecclesiastical paths. In this way the governments of Spain and Poland, in the 16th century, exhausted the marrow of their subjects for centuries to come, by ecclesiastical tyranny and religious wars; and condemned the polity of the former to a benumbing paralysis, and that of the latter to a dissolute anarchy. These were the paths on which Robespierre was now entering. According to his

design, the Revolution, which had once looked to Hampden and Franklin as its exemplars, which had then raged like the peasants of George Metzler and Thomas Münzer, was to end in a torpid and silent despotism *à la* Philip II.

After St. Just had talked of a new organisation of society, and Billaud of the eradication of all old customs and habits, Robespierre himself, on the 7th of May, announced the future religion of the State. What he had originally only used as a party weapon against the Hebertists, and a political bait for the rural population, had rapidly developed itself into a main element of his whole policy. He felt that a lasting dominion must, at some point or other, have a hold on the impulses and affections of the people. The instrument which lay nearest to his hand—the allurement of military glory—was denied to him, and with the instinct of ambition he discovered the serviceableness of religion as a political cement. In his discourse, which in the main adhered to the views expressed in his former speeches against Hebert's atheism, he began by declaring, that France was separated from the rest of the world, that she was 2,000 years in advance of other nations, that her people seemed scarcely to be fashioned of the same clay as the rest of mankind—so opposed to them did they appear in all their desires and moral ideas. It was no longer difficult, he said, to secure the Republic, all that was needed was to continue to do the contrary of all that had been done in former times. He saw the solution of this problem in the principle of founding the State on virtue, developing in mankind a steady impulse towards morality, and giving to moral laws the divine consecration of religion. "It is not," said he, "a question of the scientific controversies of philosophers; let them go their own ways. It is not a question of the restoration of ambitious priests, who are in religion, what quacks are in medicine. But the idea of the godhead and immortality is an eternal remembrance of justice, and is therefore human and republican. Accordingly the Convention decreed the acknowledgement of a *Supreme Being* by

the French people, the institution of 36 annual festivals as a new religious service, and the performance of the first act of divine worship in honour of the Supreme Being on the 8th of June. In the evening the Jacobins did homage to their chief with great parade; some days afterwards the Municipality resolved to go in a body and offer their warmest thanks to the Convention; and the Committee of Public Safety ordered that an inscription should be placed on every church, "To the Supreme Being!"

The unanimity and subjection of the nation seemed complete. Outwardly, indeed, Robespierre attained his immediate object. What shape the new cultus would ultimately take no one could foresee, and, what was now presented to them appeared to the French peasants, as well as to foreign Powers, a considerable improvement on the filthy disorders of Hébert's worship of reason. But the majority of the Convention were in the highest degree alarmed. The Representatives, whose greatest recommendation had hitherto been the plundering of churches—the friends of Danton, who knew no religion but sensual enjoyment—the associates of Hebert and Brissot, who from their youth up had placed the pride of their education and their statesmanship in their contempt for religion—were filled with the deepest indignation. They dared not resist; they listened to Robespierre's religious utterances with suppressed fury, and only gave vent to their feelings, by boisterously applauding every sentence which was directed against fanaticism and the priests. Robespierre observed it with all the keen sensitiveness of a new ruler, and made no secret of his displeasure. The first who saw themselves affected by it were some Dantonists, Bourdon de l'Oise, who had already been threatened with a penal indictment in February, Fréron the nearest friend of the murdered Desmoulins, Tallien, whom Robespierre's agents had incessantly accused, on account of his proceedings in Bordeaux, his previous extortions and subsequent indulgence. These men assembled with a few other friends, to consider whether there was any means of

freeing the Convention from the tyranny of the Committee. They then made an attempt at opposition on occasion of a taxation bill, but received such a brutal rebuff from Robespierre, that Tallien and Bourdon, immediately afterwards, solemnly and submissively recanted.

On the 23rd of May, a certain Ladmiral, formerly a lottery clerk, after having vainly lain in wait for Robespierre, made an attempt to shoot Collot d'Herbois in his own house. His weapon missed fire, the murderer was seized, and boasted of his intention to the end. On the 24th a young girl named Cecile Renaud was arrested in Robespierre's house, with a large knife about her; she, however, denied all murderous intentions, and said that she only wished to see how a tyrant behaved.[1] Barère took advantage of these occurrences to pour forth new tirades against Pitt, whom he pointed out as the originator of both attempts, and, with the eager approbation of Robespierre, the Convention decreed that no English or Hanoverian soldier should for the future be made prisoner of war. The Convention, the Jacobin Club, the Municipality, and the Sections, vied with one another on this occasion in expressions of indignation, devotion and enthusiasm; yet the rulers were by no means at ease. Both in Paris and the Provinces hunger and misery prevailed among the population; riots and strikes took place in several quarters; and it was extremely doubtful whether it would be possible to feed the people, and keep them quiet, until harvest time. The zeal of the Police authorities was therefore incessantly incited, the officials of the Post-office received instructions to forward all letters, which were in any way suspicious, or were addressed to foreign countries, to the Committee of Public Safety; and Robespierre, who distrusted the *Comité de Sûreté générale*—which was usually entrusted with the direction of the Police—on account of its Hebertist leaning, established a secret

[1] Ladmiral and Cecile were, of course, executed, after an imprisonment of several weeks.

bureau *haute police*, which employed itself principally in closely watching obnoxious deputies. To the same end it was resolved to form, in addition to the National Guard, another force, which could be thoroughly depended on, for the protection of the capital, from which the army might gradually be supplied with trustworthy officers. On the 1st of June the establishment of a permanent camp near Sablons was decreed, under the name of *Ecole de Mars*, in which 3,000 youths of 16 to 17 years old were to be trained by a revolutionary education as republican soldiers, and commanded by General Labretechę, an enthusiastic admirer of Robespierre.

Amidst these cares the day approached, for the festival of the Supreme Being, which Robespierre regarded as the public inauguration of the new system of government. He had caused himself to be named President of the Convention during the last few weeks, that he might be able to occupy the most prominent place during the festivities; he expected to produce a great impression on the people, and was in a state of unusual exaltation, and less accessible, and more monosyllabic and reserved, than ever. On the 8th of June a refreshing sunshine rested upon the city; by the command of the Convention all the houses were decked with flowers and garlands, but were left empty, under the protection, as the edict said, of republican virtue. The whole population, men and women, youths and maidens, children and infants, were summoned to the garden of the Tuileries to hear the address of Robespierre, to see the statue of atheism sink into the dust, and to march to the sound of military music to the Champ de Mars; where a second oration of the President, a religious-patriotic-popular hymn, and loud thunders from the cannon, would conclude the fête. Everything took place according to the programmę, except that Robespierre caused a long delay, by making the Assembly wait several hours for his appearance. His friends looked everywhere for him, until they found him at the house of an acquaintance, standing at the window lost in

dreamy transports at the sight of the countless mass below him. The malcontents of the Convention were not a little enraged, and Bourdon and Merlin of Thionville were so blinded by their vexation, as to indulge in loud expressions of contempt during his speech, and to ridicule the new high priest, in the face of all the people. He saw their gestures, and even heard some of their words: "See how radiant he is—how he inhales the homage of the people; he already feels himself their lord, he would like to be their God also." He felt it keenly, in spite of the tumultuous applause with which great bodies of the people received him. The words which he wrote soon afterwards—"Do these dwarfs wish to renew the conspiracy of the Titans, and to take Heaven by storm!"—sufficiently expressed his irritation. He was deeply wounded, and resolved immediately to bring forward a long contemplated measure, which should place the heads of his audacious adversaries at his disposal, and at his alone.

Ever since the legislation of the preceding September, the Revolutionary Tribunal had been in a state of incessant and ever increasing activity. It broke up the several political oppositions, and smoothed the path of the Government by the successive destruction of the Girondists, Hebertists, and Dantonists. It impressed the doctrines of Communism on the people, by sometimes sending a lady of rank to the scaffold, for feeding her horses on oats; and at another time a number of peasants, for wasting corn and bread. It helped to fill the Treasury by so considerably lessening the number of State creditors by executions, and increasing the mass of confiscated property, that the expression was current in the Committees, "to coin money with the guillotine!" The Tribunal unquestionably formed the main wheel in the machine of the Revolutionary government; Robespierre had always bestowed the greatest attention upon it, and filled the greater part of its offices with his own partisans. Since September he had accustomed Fouquier Tinville, who had hitherto received his instructions from the *Comité de Sûreté*

générale," [1] to seek them daily in the Bureau of the Committee of Public Safety, and in consequence of the accumulation of other work in the hands of his colleagues, he soon made himself sole master of this department. And since he had established the already mentioned bureau *de haute police* in the same building, the complete and unconditional subordination of Fouquier to his commands was officially pronounced.[2] Yet Robespierre was by no means satisfied with this result. The Tribunal condemned twenty persons to death, on an average, every week. But Robespierre thought that with this number he could not by any means produce the degree of intimidation among the people which was necessary for his purposes, and he continually urged a quicker process, and more numerous convictions.[3] When, in February, a juryman replied to an exhortation of this nature, by saying that the legal forms would not allow of any different course, Robespierre cried out: "Ah, these forms—you ought to have a law which would free you from these forms." In May Fouquier learned from Dumas, then Vicepresident of the Tribunal, that a law to this effect had been drawn up,

[1] Evidence of Fouquier at his trial. — [2] Resolution of the Committee of Public Safety (Floreal 25) written by Robespierre's ownhand (Imperial Archives). Fouquier is directed to lay before him the cases in hand, every decade. After the 9th of Thermidor, Fouquier declared that he had always transacted business with the whole Committee, and never with Robespierre alone, and that he knew nothing about the secret bureau. Whereupon Billaud, on the 9th of Germinal III, brought forward a letter of Fouquet addressed "*aux representants du peuple, membres du C. de S. P. chargés de la police générale.* After these dates it is quite immaterial whether Fouquet had a personal liking for Robespierre or *not*, as Louis Blanc repeatedly assures us (X. 20, 484). He has no other proof of this than Fouquier's assurances, after the 9th of Thermidor, when every body disowned Robespierre. The main point is that before the 9th of Thermidor, Fouquier, whether he loved or hated Robespierre, obeyed him implicitly, and, whether he visited him in person or not, regularly sent in the lists of cases to him. — [3] Evidence of Fouquier Tinville at the bar of the Convention August 9th 1794.

which would curtail the proceedings, and lessen the number of jurors. Fouquier, a thoroughly coarse and unfeeling man, had no objection to make to the cruelty of the measure, but the decrease in the number of jurors seemed to him impolitic, because it might appear as if the Government were unable to beat up a sufficient number of subservient tools. It was well known that several of these, weary of the daily recurring horrors, were only kept in their seats by the threat of death to themselves. He therefore appealed to the Committee of Public Safety, and addressed Billaud, Collot, and Carnot personally, but was referred by them to Robespierre, who, they said, understood these matters. Robespierre who was little inclined to tolerate a difference of opinion in one of his own tools, called him an aristocrat and stopped his mouth.

The Committee, therefore, from the very first, agreed with Robespierre on this point.[1] It was as agreeable to the other members, as to Robespierre himself, to increase indefinitely their power of life and death over the French citizens. They even left to their dreaded colleague the absolute choice of the persons, who were, in future, to shed the blood of the obnoxious, in the capacity of judges and jurors; and confirmed the decision by which he rejected 21 of the candidates proposed by the *Comité de Sûrete générale*. Meanwhile the hostile attitude of Tallien, Bourdon and Merlin de Thilonville, excited in his mind the singular idea of inducing the Convention to give up one of its most important privileges—that no deputy could be brought before the Tribunal without the consent of the Convention itself. If he succeeded in this, a few directions to Fouquier would enable him to drown all opposition in the Convention in the blood of those who raised it; and, once secure of the all-powerful Tribunal, he would no longer have to fear any rival even in the Committee of Public Safety. With the

[1] We only know that St. Just was of a different opinion. Hamel, St. Just, 520.

greatest secrecy, therefore, he caused the finishing stroke to be put to the measure by his friend Couthon, and two days after the festival of the Supreme Being, on the 10th of June (22 Prairial), Couthon brought it before the Convention for their acceptance. He complained that the ancient despotism had completely falsified men's ideas of right and wrong, and surrounded State criminals, who threatened the welfare of the whole community, with the same protecting forms as the violators of mere private rights. In order to remedy this evil for all future time, he proposed that the Tribunal should be reconstituted, Dumas be made President, and 65 other patriots, whose names he gave, jurors and judges. The Tribunal was to be divided into four sections, acting side by side, who should punish the enemies of the people with death. Enemies of the people, he said, were royalists, calumniators of the present government and the patriots, traitors to their country, fraudulent contractors, seducers of the people, and corrupters of morals. The prisoners were no longer to be defended by counsel; there were to be no more private examinations, no evidence of witnesses, if the jury had already formed their opinions in any other way. No one but the Convention, or the two Government committees, or the Representatives on mission, or the Public accuser, was to bring any one before the Tribunal.

Submissive as the Convention usually was, its present fears were, on this occasion, outweighed by its anxiety about the future. A few voices demanded adjournment; one man cried out that he would shoot himself if it were not granted. But when Robespierre with the greatest vehemence refused all delay, not another sound was uttered, and the entire bill was unanimously adopted. During the night, however, the fears of the opposition deputies increased; their views gained in clearness, and were directed to the one decisive point. On the following day Bourdon brought forward a motion, that the Convention should declare its intention of maintaining, as heretofore, the exclusive right of

impeaching its own members. Couthon and Robespierre happened to be absent, and therefore Bourdon's motion was carried without further discussion. Robespierre poured forth his wrath the same evening, first in the Jacobin club, in a violent attack on the Hebertist Fouché, whom he branded as an obstinate atheist, and then in the Committee of Public Safety, where a very lively debate arose on the entire bill. The old antagonism between Collot d'Herbois and Robespierre once more came to light. Collot, who was quite ready to hand over thousands of other citizens to the Tribunal of his rival, would not sacrifice another faction of the Convention, and least of all his old Hebertist friends; and Carnot, who for weeks past had been at open feud with St. Just respecting the conduct of the war in Belgium, and with Robespierre on the subject of La Vendée, gave Collot his emphatic support. The dispute was so loud and violent that it excited the notice of the passers-by in the street; the final result was, that Robespierre was obliged to forego the immediate execution of the obnoxious deputies, and, on the other hand, the Committee consented to adopt the principle of the law in its full extent. On the 12th, therefore, Couthon, in the name of the Committee, demanded the formal repeal of the decree which Bourdon had carried, as an intolerable insult to the Committee, which was thereby charged with the desire of attacking the precious privilege of the Convention—an intention which it was very far from entertaining. Bourdon and Tallien, in answer to this singular interpretation, pointed to the wording of the law, which left no room for such a privilege. Whereupon Robespierre lost all patience, and called Bourdon a despicable and worthless *intriguant;* and as Billaud, at the same time, denounced the impudence of Tallien as perfectly incredible, the trembling Convention once more submitted, and revoked their last decree. Whatever Couthon might say respecting the intentions of the Committee, the life of every deputy was now placed, according to the letter of the law,

in the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, and Fouquier Tinville. The only hope for Bourdon, Tallien, and Fouché, lay in the continuance of the discord which rendered one portion of the Committee averse to Robespierre's plans: and how precarious such a protection was, had been lately proved, in the most glaring manner, by the example of Hebert and Danton. Robespierre left the sitting, with deadly fury in his heart, unshaken in his bloody purpose; and now only brooded over the means of breaking down the resistance of the Committee, as he had done that of the Convention.

He had, in fact, but little prospect of coming to an understanding with his colleagues in the Committee. It would have been easy to do so if he had only sought a continuance of his rule after the former fashion; he had done more than any other person to bring about the present state of things —the Dictatorship of the Committee, the subjection of the French people, and the general war against Europe; and his associates would gladly have left him, if that were all, the predominant influence in the Government. But we have seen what phases of the Revolution were altogether repugnant to him, in spite of his former efforts to promote them. He desired popular despotism, but not the present noisy, tumultuous, filthy despotism; he wished for a dumb, well disciplined, and monotonous subjection of the people. At home, the anarchy which he had himself unchained against the former rulers was, abhorrent to him, now that he was himself in power, on account of its self-willed lawlessness. Abroad, he looked upon the war which he had spread over Europe in the former summer, with painful and growing anxiety. He saw, on the one hand, the possibility that the reputation of a victorious general might throw his own into the shade; and, on the other, he had learnt from the possession of power, that the purposeless rushing into universal war was a folly. It is true that he was no more able than any of his friends to contemplate a state of perfect peace.

"France," wrote St. Just at this time, "must have an army of 800,000 men in time of peace, in order to be terrible to all States; it must introduce a coinage which can never gain currency in foreign countries." He therefore objected to all active intercourse with his neighbours, whom he would have threatened, even after the conclusion of peace, by the maintenance of a force superior to that of the whole of Europe. But at any rate the foreign policy of the country might have been regulated from this point of view, the mass of opponents separated, and one monarch of ancient Europe employed against another. We see that Robespierre made exactly the same experience as Danton had done in the former year. As head of the government he threw contemptuously behind him the favorite ideas of his demagogic past. As Danton, in the former summer, had endeavoured to strengthen himself for the contest with Austria by making peace with England and Prussia, so Robespierre, in his hatred against England, desired to come to an understanding with the Emperor Francis. But he immediately encountered the same difficulties which he had himself prepared for Danton in the preceding year; and was charged by the majority of the Committee with entertaining lukewarm, if not traitorous, sentiments. With the exception of Couthon and St. Just, all the other members adhered to the old antipathy towards Austria, which had been so often preached by Robespierre himself, and to the endeavour to bring about that universal Revolution in Europe, which he had formerly proclaimed. Between these two points of view there was no middle course. A reconciliation of views with respect to home questions was still less conceivable. That varnish of rectitude, virtue and piety, the want of which was for the future, according to St. Just and Robespierre, to be regarded as a crime worthy of death, was an object of ridicule and hatred to the rest of the Committee of Public Safety. As soon as Robespierre's back was turned, men like Barère and Collot d'Herbois ridiculed the pedantic ar-

rogance, which desired to subject the victorious Revolution to a new priesthood. These sentiments were particularly strong in the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, in which Robespierre had only two followers, David the painter, and St. Just's friend, Lebas. From this quarter Vadier, on the 15th, dealt a secret and deeply felt blow at Robespierre's religious zeal, by denouncing before the Convention an old lady called Catharine Theot, who considered herself to be the mother of God, held a harmless conventicle in a garret with a few of her admirers, and, unfortunately, raved about Robespierre as the restorer of religion in France. During Vadier's report, which now ridiculed the folly of the sectarians, and now thundered against the criminality of such fanaticism, inextinguishable laughter ran through the Convention, and Robespierre ground his teeth with fury, as he stood helplessly exposed—the real butt of all this ridicule.

In short the struggle showed itself on all sides between the wish to swim on, day after day, with the revolutionary stream, and the effort to stop in the downward course, and to found the dominion which had been gained on a lasting basis. It was the crisis to which every revolutionary triumph brings its champions, whether for purification or destruction; the moment, in which the arms of revolution are turned against him who previously bore them, when he must either justify his inconsistency by the intrinsic merit of his rule, or perish.

The breach between the two parties of the Committee, therefore, was not healed, though Lindet and Prieur repeatedly exhorted them to unity, though Barère surrounded Robespierre with eye and lip service, though Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes themselves dreaded an open contest, and in all subordinate matters diligently strove to please their dreaded colleague. Robespierre, at this time, was busily engaged in seeking new victims for the Revolutionary Tribunal from the mass of incarcerated *suspects*, in the place of the obnoxious deputies, who had escaped his clutches.

His friend Fleuriot, Mayor of Paris, had discovered a prisoner in irons who was willing to make false charges of rebellion and conspiracy against his fellow-captives; and the Committee hastened to entrust other confidants of Robespierre—Lanne, Dumas and Hermann—with the prosecution of this affair, by means of which a daily crop of 50, 60, and even 80 heads soon sprang up for the bloody scaffold.[1] In fact the activity of this horrible tribunal increased in a manner which language has no words to characterise. From its establishment to the 22nd of Prairial, it had passed 1,200 sentences of death; from that day to the fall of Robespierre—about six weeks—1,400 more. Single indictments comprehended 20 or 30 people taken promiscuously—great noblemen from Paris, day labourers from Marseilles,

[1] The modern admirers of Robespierre are constantly endeavouring to free their hero from this reproach, and to throw it on the majority of the committees alone, the destruction of which they consider to have been Robespierre's only object in the law of the 22nd Prairial. One example of their way of arguing may suffice. When Ladmiral and C. Renault were brought before the tribunal, 52 other prisoners were brought up at the same time, all under the charge of a *conspiration de l'étranger*. Among these was a Madame de St. Amaranthe, with her daughter, son and son-in-law—a family of more than doubtful reputation. After Robespierre's fall, his opponents circulated the calumny, that Robespierre, when intoxicated at her table, had divulged secrets of State, and that St. Just had vainly made proposals of love to the old lady, and that on this account the unhappy people had been brought to the scaffold. Instead of confining himself to the refutation of these charges, which would have been easy enough, Louis Blanc goes on to argue that Robespierre's enemies implicated the St. Amaranthes and the 48 other victims, in the *Procès* C. Renault, in order to throw odium on Robespierre as the author of this butchery; whereas neither he nor St. Just had anything to do with it. But all the authentic information which we possess respecting the fall of the St. Amaranthe family consists in the two facts, that a police indictment was found in St. Just's papers, and that St. Just, in his impeachment of Danton, denounced them as his infamous accomplices. Of any other prosecutor of the St. Amaranthes besides St. Just no one has ever heard.

sailors from Brest, peasants from Alsace—who were accused of conspiring together to destroy the Republic. All examination, discussion, and evidence were dispensed with; the names of the victims were hardly read out to the jury, and it happened more than once, that the son was mistaken for the father—an entirely innocent person for the one really charged—and sent to the guillotine. The judges urged the jury to pass sentences of death, with loud threats; members of the Government committees attended daily, and applauded the bloody verdicts with ribald jests. On this spot at least the strife of parties was hushed. Billaud-Varennes seldom agreed with Robespierre in any other respect, but he signed the list of the prisoners marked out for to-morrow's butchery "*avec plaisir*."[1] The Rulers passed some weeks in this congenial occupation in tolerable outward harmony. Robespierre now seldom showed himself in the meetings of the entire Committee, but he did not neglect to have minutes of its proceedings laid before him for his perusal and signature. He was, however, all the more punctual—as at the period of his struggle with Hebert—in his appearance in the rostra of the Jacobin Club, which he had left, since the end of March, almost entirely to the guidance of Collot d'Herbois, but which now, in the expectation of a fresh conflict, he wished to appropriate to himself exclusively. Like Collot, he had not yet made up his mind for the final struggle, and was still undecided as to the time when it should be commenced, and the extent to which it should be carried. But on the 27th of June St. Just arrived in Paris with the news of the victory of Fleurus; the necessity of coming to some decision in foreign politics became more pressing, and St. Just, who had formerly spurred his friend to action against Danton, once more roused him to a bold and energetic decision. Robespierre, accordingly, again brought forward his motion in the Committee to summon

[1] Evidence of Trinchard at the trial of Fouquier; Buchez, XXXIV. 336.

the recalcitrant members of the Convention before the Revolutionary Tribunal. He was again repulsed, and was obliged to listen to some strong language against arbitrary power and dictatorship. Whereupon, on the 1st of July, he laid these dissensions for public discussion before the Jacobin club. He complained that the party of Danton, the party of the half-hearted, was being resuscitated, that men accused him of ambition, "not only in London," he said, "but here in Paris. You would shudder, if I were to tell you where, and by what men, invested as they are with a sacred character. Should they compel me" he cried in conclusion, "to leave the Committee of Public Safety, I should still remain representative of the people, and still continue the death struggle against tyrants to my latest breath." Two days after these open threats, a fresh debate took place in the Committee. Hermann had collected such plentiful materials in the prisons, that he sent in a list of 160 persons, who were said to have conspired, during their imprisonment, against the Government; a motion was carried to send them all on one day before the Tribunal—*i. e.* to the scaffold. In consideration of the evident state of public feeling in Paris, this was a little too much, even for Collot; "What will you do," he cried, "when you have made men disregard even the punishment of death?"—and it was agreed to distribute the mass of victims over three days at least. Robespierre was still more irritated when, on the 4th of July, Barère, usually so tractable, made an undisguised attack in the Convention on the foreign policy of his late master. This was the time when the Austrians began their retreat from Belgium. Robespierre had succeeded so far, that the Committee, instead of a rapid pursuit of the hostile army, had decreed the recapture of the four French fortresses. Barère now carried a motion threatening the garrisons with a general massacre, if they made the least resistance; and he rejected every thought of peace with Austria in a speech full of noisy bluster. "We have found you out," he cried, "ye

cunning friends of peace; we know your efforts to damp our courage, and to weaken our armies; but beware!—freedom has her eye upon you, and has revealed to us the consequences of a premature peace." Robespierre replied some days afterwards, and again in the Jacobin club. "A people," he said, "does not become illustrious by the overthrow of Kings; our lofty mission is the contest against parties, and the foundation of an empire of virtue and justice. Of what avail are these bombastic common-places against Pitt? What is the use of these noisy and empty bulletins of victory? The same persons who indulge in these high-sounding phrases, secretly undermine the government, oppose the most useful measures, calumniate the truest patriots, and throw suspicion on the strongest bulwark of our liberties —the Revolutionary Tribunal."

The skirmish of words grew hotter and hotter, and deadly threats of irreconcileable hatred flashed forth with ever-increasing frequency. Robespierre already proceeded to make direct preparations for his *coup d'état*. His confidants in the Municipality and the Parisian Sections began to canvass individual citizens; here and there it was said that a new 31st of May was necessary against the majority of the Convention,[1] and an attempt was made to agitate and excite the people by public carousals in the streets.[2] It was soon seen, however, that the masses had as little liking for Robespierre as for Collot, and the fraternal feasts were discontinued by order of the Municipality. Robespierre's friends then turned with all the more zeal to the Jacobins, but the result was not much more satisfactory. The

[1] Couthon warns his hearers in the Jacobin Club against such compromising expressions. — [2] Such is the statement of Barère. Garnier, a juror in the Revolutionary Tribunal, reported to Robespierre (27 Messidor), that he had instituted banquets of this kind, but had afterwards wisely given them up, because the Aristocrats had turned them to their own purposes.

Club was in all respects subservient, and expelled Tallien, Bourdon and Fouché, but there was not a trace of the old ardour. "The Club," cried the younger Robespierre, "is feeble and lukewarm, and no longer helps the persecuted patriots; I only desire a grave for myself beside that of my brother." At the same time they tried the provinces. Although Robespierre had forfeited a portion of his influence in the Committee of Public Safety by his rare attendance at its meetings, he still had the home administration at his unconditional disposal, by means of the personal devotion of the Ministerial Commissioners. Hermann, Commissioner of the Interior, summoned trustworthy officials, and influential club-men, from all parts of the country, to Paris, in order to take counsel with them respecting the impending change. The Committee, the majority of which observed these steps with growing anxiety, induced the Convention on the 20th of July, to decree the expulsion of these persons from the city; and Barère, in his speech, complained bitterly of Robespierre's exciting orations in the Jacobin Club. At the same time the *Comité de Sûreté générale* violently protested against the interference of Robespierre's Police Bureau in the department which belonged of right to them; and the majority of the Committee of Public Safety came to a resolution to dissolve the bureau. On the 22nd the two Government Committees held a sitting in common, to deliberate on the general position of affairs. Robespierre was not there, but St. Just was present, and Billaud sounded him, to see whether he could be brought over to the side of the majority. The question was, as to the expediency of making a report to the Convention respecting the late convulsions in public opinion, and drawing up a manifesto, such as the Committee was regularly wont to issue before any great catastrophe. Billaud-Varennes complained of Robespierre's ambition, described the situation of the country as "volcanic," and finally proposed to St. Just that he should undertake to bring up the report. The latter, though

entirely on the side of Robespierre, thought it better not to deprive his opponents of all hope. He agreed to undertake the report, provided that it might be expressed in respectful terms towards the Convention and its members; he would, he said, probe the source of all the existing evils, and unveil the whole scheme of subversion. It was evident from this that the crisis was no longer to be deferred, but there was no less mutual fear than wrath between the opposing parties, and Robespierre determined to make a last attempt at reconciliation. He proposed a second sitting of the two Committees for the following day.

Before we proceed to speak of Robespierre's catastrophe, and the termination of the Reign of Terror, it will be well to cast a glance at the condition of France at this period, and realise to ourselves the condition into which the country had fallen under the rule of the Terrorists.

With the exception of La Vendée and some districts of Bretagne, the Revolutionary government was acknowledged, at this time, throughout the length and breadth of the land. Every shadow of resistance was removed, every weapon had been torn from the hands of the citizens, every hope from their hearts; and trembling obedience prevailed thoughout the entire population. The Committee of Public Safety ruled with more absolute power than ever a French King had done before them. The Committee was responsible as a body, according to the law, for the acts of each of its members; but the infinite accumulation of business soon led to a division of labour of such a nature, that each member undertook the exclusive management of a single department, and the rest attached their signatures—which were formally necessary—to the acts of their colleagues, without any investigation of their character. Thus Carnot presided over the Army, Jean Bon St. André over the Fleet, while Barère managed the Foreign affairs, and Robespierre the Police and the Courts of law. But this arrangement never attained any settled regularity, and the less so, because single members

of the Committee were frequently absent, and for a long time together—Couthon from ill health—St. André with the fleet—Prieur in La Vendée—St. Just with the Army of the North—and because the boundless license which formed the fundamental character of the entire system, manifested itself in the relation between its main supporters. Robespierre, *e. g.* caused Carnot's secretaries to be arrested, and St. Just interfered in the more important measures of the War department. It depended, therefore, not upon any practical rule, but sometimes on political considerations, sometimes on mere chance, what matters were debated and settled in the general sittings of the Committee.[1] It is evident that, with such a mode of proceeding, a thorough, consistent, and useful administration of public affairs was from the very first impossible. And the proportion of influence enjoyed by each member in the heart of the Committee itself was equally uncertain. We have seen from the new programme of the Government, the repudiation of atheism, and the law of the 22nd Prairial, that Robespierre's influence prevailed after the fall of Hébert; and during the last few weeks the same relative position was, on the whole, maintained, in spite of the new party divisions. It is therefore absurd when the modern admirers of Robespierre represent him as powerless, because, after the 22nd, he did not take part in all the Committee's sittings *in pleno*. For the latter, as we have said, were occupied with the less important and more variable portion of the functions of the Government; Robespierre was daily informed of what had

[1] The protocols of the sittings, and hundreds of simple *arrêtés (Archives de l'empire)*, show this in the clearest manner. Nor was the relative competence of the Committee of Public Safety, and the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, or of the *Bureau de Police* of the former, and the entire Committee, more sharply defined. Arrests and liberations were carried out by all these authorities promiscuously. Vid. Hamel's St. Just 543.

taken place in them, continued his personal labours as member of the Committee with increased zeal, and exercised the greatest influence, from the unconditional subservience of the civil authorities of Paris, the Revolutionary Tribunal, and almost all the Ministerial Committees.[1] Pillé, Commissioner of the land force, alone was from the nature of his office, more subject to Carnot's influence than Robespierre's. But still, as needs no further proof, this loose and arbitrary mode of carrying on business no longer satisfied the latter's rising ambition. As he had, on a former occasion, succeeded in subordinating the local and district authorities to the central government, so he now wished to subject the latter to his own will, in a settled and formal manner.

The second, or nominally the first, central authority of the Republic, the Convention, was impotent in opposition to the Committee, which, however, according to law, could at any moment be dismissed by a vote of the Convention, and yet had the arbitrary disposal of the life of every Deputy. The provision that the Committee needed fresh authorization from the Convention every month for its continuance had sunk into a mere form. "Ah," cried Barère on the 12th of July, after finishing another report, "I had almost forgotten, that the powers of the Committee must be again renewed;" and the Convention decreed the renewal by long-continued clapping of hands. Yet the majority were, at heart, thoroughly tired of the yoke. The former Right, the Moderates

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[1] The papers of the Committee in the *Archives de l'empire* supply a number of confirmations of this fact. Many of these have been long published, and are altogether ignored by the modern admirers of Robespierre and his associates;—*e. g.* Fouquet's statements before the Convention (August 9th) respecting Robespierre's participation in the prosecution of the prison conspiracy, in the middle of Messidor—the statements of the Editor of the Moniteur (*Moniteur 12 Germinal an III.*),—the Decree of the Committee of 2 Messidor (Buchez XXXV, 43.)—the Decree of the Committee of 2 Thermidor — the *Rapport des Vingt-un, pièces Nr. 11 etc.* Conf. also Wilson Croker's *Essays*, p. 468.

and Girondists, saw with secret joy how their conquerors were lacerating one another. And only a minority even of the Mountain consisted of the friends of Robespierre; the former hatred between Dantonists and Hebertists daily decreased in the common danger with which the wrath of the Dictator threatened them all. Of the secret deliberations of the Committee they only heard vague, but still very alarming, accounts; several lists of the heads demanded by Robespierre were in circulation; sometimes five or six, sometimes eighteen and even more, were named. Only a few of them were courageous enough to wish for a contest; most of them endeavoured by inactivity, and keeping out of sight, to fall into the oblivion which alone could save them. Not more than 200 members, therefore, were generally present at the sittings of the Convention at this period. Of the 753 who were originally elected, 50 had been murdered or executed, 20 proscribed, 73 arrested, 100 were absent in the Departments or with the armies, and, lastly, 280 busied themselves in the humble labours of the Committees entrusted with the different branches of legislation. In these,—owing to the destruction of old institutions—there was room for infinite activity; but here, too, everything was paralysed by the crushing weight of the dominant despotism. Not a single beneficent enactment, not a single lasting institution, was produced during this period of the Revolution. The only one of the Committees to which circumstances allotted any field of practical operations, was the Committee of Finance. In this department Ramel sometimes showed a certain amount of technical knowledge, and Cambon his stubborn and violent self-will; they were both in very bad odour with Robespierre, and their names were to be found in every list of the proscribed.

Nor were the Ministerial functions established on a firmer or more liberal basis than those of the Convention itself. There was simply no rule at all, as to what affairs were to be left to the subordinate authorities, what the Ministers

were to do themselves, or, lastly, what was to be laid before the Committee of Public Safety, for its decision. It was a mere matter of accident or personal influence, whether the reports of the Conventional Commissioners, the local Magistrates, or the Clubs, were sent to the Committee, one of the Ministries, or the Jacobin Club at Paris. In the same irregular and arbitrary way individual members of the Committee interfered in turn, with domineering violence, in the labours of the different Commissions. The latter, therefore, were altogether incapable of acquiring a comprehensive knowledge of the business before them, or of conducting it in a regular manner. "Every action of this Government betrayed its origin; even then, when Europe was trembling before its armies, it was a mere club which had possessed itself of power, a popular assembly with the barest sufficiency of organisation. On the one side there was the boundless and lawless despotism of the leading demagogues, and on the other, the many-headed mob, at once servile and brutal. No State in the world ever maintained a larger number of officials than this Jacobin community, which, in this way, most conveniently supported and increased its adherents. The Commission of Trade and Supplies alone numbered 35,000 paid officers, and the other departments were equally liberal in making new appointments.[1] In the Departments the District and Town councillors still existed, and their numbers were very considerable; but they had virtually given up all their influence to the Revolutionary Committees, which were now established in every Commune of the Empire, and which, with the concurrence of the Clubs, and in the capacity of Police *Bureaux de Surveillance*, gradually assumed the

[1] Dubois Crancé, Conv. Nat. May 5, 1795. Johannot said, on the 14th of April 1795: "The Revolutionary Government has brought us to such a pass, that we pay salaries to a larger number of persons than all the other States of Europe together.

whole administration, and made their report directly to the central authorities. The number of these amounted to 52,000, with more than 560,000 members, each of whom, by the law of the 5th of September 1793, was entitled to receive 3 francs a day. According to this they would have cost the State 591 millions a year, *i. e.* 10 millions more than the Constituent Assembly had proposed for the entire budget of the State. The Finance committee of the Convention, therefore, in spite of the law, could not be induced to furnish the funds for these daily payments; but the Revolutionary committees, insisting on their rights, raised their pay directly from the people themselves, in the shape of Revolutionary taxes, although the law of December 4th, 1792, had forbidden the levying of any such extraordinary taxes by the subordinate authorities. One illegal act was counterbalanced by another. [1]

Before the Revolution France, contained 4½ millions of adult men capable of work. Of these more than 100,000 had perished in internal contests, an equal number had fled into foreign countries, and as many more were incarcerated as *suspects*. A million more were enrolled in the army, and were consequently in the pay of the State; a second million was provided with offices and salaries in the administration of home affairs, and thus the industry of the country was directly robbed of half its strength. It sometimes happened that in villages of twelve households, all the men belonged to the Revolutionary committee of the place, and exercised a zealous superintendence over one another for the sake of the daily wages. It is evident how few of the great mass could be competent for the task of administrating such an office; the majority looked on their

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[1] On all these points conf. Cambon's Report, Conv. Nat. 6. frim. an. III. and the debate in Conv. Nat. 17 brumaire II.

official position, not merely as a source of profit, but chiefly as a means of crushing a personal adversary, or getting rid of an obnoxious relation, an importunate neighbour, or a troublesome creditor. As they belonged exclusively to the class of peasants and artisans, and all their interests, inclinations, and enmities, lived and moved within their own sphere, the revolutionary terrorism, which was originally directed against the *noblesse*, the clergy, and the wealthy citizens, was now brought, in full measure to the doors of the lower classes. The peasants, especially, suffered greatly; for it was just in the villages that the financial and religious convulsions of the last few years had produced the most striking effects. The clergy of the towns had been deprived of their benefices without any offence being taken; but the rural priest found a number of ardent defenders. In the towns—even before the Revolution—the sudden enrichment of a small speculator, and the fall of a great capitalist, was nothing unheard of; in the villages, on the contrary, the boldest fancy had never ventured to conceive that a common farmer could ever strut about as the owner of a nobleman's mansion, or that a poor serf could acquire rich portions of Church lands. But now a full third of the French soil had undergone a change of this kind, in consequence of the great confiscations; and every passion which avarice, envy, and the overthrow of all old habits, could awaken in the hearts of the peasants, was excited to the highest possible degree. The new proprietors, joyfully welcomed at first by the ruling party, were soon regarded from all sides with sinister looks. The Government thought that they were again forming estates of too great extent; the small proprietors drew unfavourable camparisons between them and the former lords, and there was no lack of envious neighbours and political opponents. The revolutionary persecution in the summer of 1794 was especially directed against this class. Two-thirds of the victims whom the Parisian Revolutionary tribunal

sentenced to death, after 22 Prairial, were peasant proprietors. [1]

We may say, in general, that the personal security of the inhabitants was no greater in July than in the previous September. The number of arrests went on increasing. In Paris it stood at between 5,000 and 7,000, and arrest was still an almost certain forerunner of death. In eight weeks the two Popular commissions, of the 14th of May, had examined 800 accused persons, and, as they reported, had found one patriot in every 80 persons; "with such justice," they added, "had the Revolutionary committes conducted the arrests." As to the Departments, less was heard of them, now that all free discussion had been stopped, than in the tumult of the former year; but what *did* transpire, showed the despotism of the Conventional Commissioners, in an unaltered light. The Departments of Vaucluse and Bouches du Rhone numbered about 500,000 inhabitants, and of these 15,000 had been arrested in May. Lyons still groaned under the proscription laws of October; the demolition of the houses was continued, and angry complaints were often enough raised in the Parisian Club that the people of *Commune Affranchie* were incorrigible. In the Jura, Bassal arrested 2,800 persons during the winter; his successors, Lejeune and Prost, were at variance, as being adherents respectively of Hebert and Robespierre, and each alternately incarcerated the partisans of his adversary. In Strasburg there were 2,000 prisoners when St. Just left the city, and it was several times proposed to drown them all in the Rhone in one day. German language and dress, especially, were considered as a proof of suspicious opinions, and, after 22 Prairial, St. Just's enthusiastic admirer, Monet, increased the number of arrests to 4,000. St. Just's journey to the Army of the North had similar results for the bor-

[1] This is shown by the official Prudhomme's *Crimes de la Revolution.* A *resumé* will be found in
lists.

der districts through which he passed. In the Departments he caused all persons of noble birth, without exception, to be arrested; and his saying flew from Club to Club, that the patriots must fill, not the prisons, but the graves, with the traitors to the people. Under such circumstances the Committee made frequent use of its right, exceptionally to allow Revolutionary tribunals to exist, or to appoint them where they did not exist, in the Provinces. Resolutions to this effect are extant from the month of Floreal for Arras, Orange, Nismes, Bourdeaux and Noirmoutiers. The two first named places have especial reason to remember the operations of these courts with horror. In Arras the bloody atrocities were conducted by a *quondam* priest, now a Conventional Commissioner, named Lebon, formerly a harmless and frivolous man, who in February had been summoned to Paris and reprimanded for his leniency. Immediately afterwards one of his associates wrote to St. Just's friend Lebas; "Lebon has returned from Paris in a holy fever; he has at once collected a revolutionary jury of sixty hairy rascals, on the Parisian model, and the guillotine has now no rest for a single moment—the heads of aristocrats, men and women, fall like hail."[1] Lebon himself, uttely devoid of moral principle, fell into a state of frantic excitement, and soon surpassed even Carrier in cruelty, dissoluteness, and brutality. The inhabitants breathed again when the law of the 14th of April appeared, which summoned all the accused to Paris; in Arras it was reckoned a gain to fall from Lebon's hands into those of Fouquier. But their persecutor, at his urgent prayer, received full powers,[2] not only to keep up the energy of his operations, but to increase its intensity. He then subjected the neighbouring towns of Cambray, Doullens and Boulogne, to an equally savage and disorderly persecution; so that, in June, the complaints of

[1] In the *Archives de l'Empire.*

[2] Resolution of the Committee of Public Safety 30 *Germinal*, drawn up in Robespierre's handwriting.

his victims could no longer be completely suppressed in Paris. The deputy Guffroy, once a vulgar fanatic like Lebon, rose against his former friend; the younger Robespierre had received intelligence from Arras which described Lebon as a Hebertist; the matter was made the subject of a lively debate in the Committee of Public Safety, and Lebon hurried over to Paris to defend himself. St. Just now took up his cause; Couthon declared in the Jacobin Club that Lebon had reanimated the spirit of liberty in his Department, and Barère carried the *ordre du jour* in the Convention against all complaints. "Everything," he said "must be allowed to the zealous Republican against the Aristocrats, if he acts from pure motives, though in somewhat rude a manner." Full of triumph Lebon returned to Arras, and announced to his creatures that the Committee had exhorted him to go on improving, and that Robespierre wished to establish a special tribunal in every frontier town.[1]

The Conventional Commissioner Maignet, supported with equal warmth by Robespierre's party, carried on affairs in the same manner, at the same time, in Orange. Immediately after the passing of the law of April 14th, he represented to the Committee the impossibility of sending all the conspirators in that quarter to Paris, and therefore proposed the establishment of a special tribunal. As he was unable to find suitable judges in the district itself, and as the same deficiency existed in the neighbouring Departments of Drome, Ardeche, etc., there arose a long and circumstantial correspondence between Robespierre's more intimate friends, which would be alone sufficient to enable us to form an historical judgment of these men.[2] Robespierre brought up his report to the Committee on the 10th of May, which resulted in the establishment of the tribunal. It received even then the same instructions—drawn up in accordance

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[1] From the papers in the *Archives de l'Empire*. Some of these are published in *Papiers inédits de Robespierre*.

[2] Conf. Buchez 35.

with Robespierre's own sketch—as the Parisian tribunal adopted after the passing of the law of 22 Prairial,[1] and produced a crop of 197 heads during the first eighteen days of its existence. On the 17th of May it happened that a tree of liberty was cut down in the village of Bedouin, not far from Avignon, during the night; whereupon Maignet caused several of the inhabitants to be executed, and the whole village, which consisted of 500 houses, to be burnt, so that the poor people, nearly 2,000 in number, wandered about without shelter in the mountains, and passed several months in subterraneous caverns and holes in the ground.[2]

Maignet himself had some doubts whether the Committee of Public Safety would approve of such severity, and warned them against mischievous leniency: but his mind was immediately set at rest, inasmuch as the Convention itself, on the motion of the Committee, expressed its entire approval. It soon appeared, however, that he did even too little for his Parisian patrons, and that, in comparison with those of Robespierre's friends, his notions were obsolete. The members of his tribunal were divided into two parties; the one wished to declare all *quondam* nobles and priests, all wealthy persons, merchants, and other educated people, guilty, without further ceremony; they further wished, in the case of artizans and day-labourers, to make a distinction, since many of the latter, they urged, were themselves deceived and seduced, and often calumniated by false witnesses. The other party would hear of no such scruples in respect to the latter class, and were furious that their colleagues adhered so slavishly to mere formalities, and demanded proofs like

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[1] In this case as we see, there is no room for the favourite excuse for the law of 22 Prairial, that it was only intended to exterminate the Terrorists. [2] Goupilleau's report Conv. Nat. 3. Frimaire III. Also the deputation of the inhabitants themselves 15. Frimaire (December 5. 1794). The silk manufactories of the place were destroyed, 60,000lbs of silk burnt, and a church blown up.

judges of the *Ancien Régime*. When Maignet inclined to the opinion of the former, the latter appealed to Robespierre's friend Payan in Paris, who decided the matter very briefly by saying that no value was to be attached to forms; that the only point to be considered was, whether the accused was a friend or foe of the Revolution; in short, that the judge must divest himself of all human feeling. And thus the bloody work continued in the South, as in the North under Lebon, its restless and unchecked course.

The proceedings of the Government against the property of its subjects were no less arbitrary and violent than against their persons.

Since the end of the civil war attention had been once more directed to the raising of taxes, which had long come to a complete stand-still,[1] and the Finance committee was empowered to make a draft of the necessary laws. No practical conclusion, however, was arrived at, and the Government, therefore, made shift meanwhile with the previous resources—requisitions, confiscations, compulsory loans, revolutionary taxes, and, above all, paper money. The total amount derived from these sources by the despotic Government of 1794, is as impossible to ascertain with any certainty, as that obtained by the anarchical Government of 1793, but we may give a few examples of the methods employed for raising money. In January, the Representatives attached to the Rhine Army ordered that 10,000,000 francs in silver should be given by the Department of the Bas Rhin, in exchange for an equal amount in paper—5,000,000, in February, by the Haut Rhin—and 10,000,000 more, in July, by the Bas Rhin. As paper money then stood at 60 per cent. discount, these three orders implied an extortion of about 16,000,000 francs. In May the Flemish war seemed to demand an increase of the cavalry forces, and the Committee

[1] Report of the Finance Committee June 12. 1795. The arrears of taxes amount to 1200 million francs.

of Public Safety immediately ordered a levy of 14,000 farm horses. In June it was thought that many of the horses in the army needed green fodder, and the Committee immediately took possession of all the meadows in 32 Departments. And lastly, in July, when the means of transport of the North Army were insufficient for their advance into Belgium, orders were issued that all the carriages and horses in Paris should be sent to the theatre of war, and undertake at least one transport each in the service of the army.

The Revolutionary taxes remained, as we have seen, for the most part in the hands of local Committees, and were all employed for political purposes—for the payment of the members of the Revolutionary Committees—for patriotic missions—for the support of the poor and the clubs—for the celebration of the worship of Reason—and the maintenance of free theatres. Only about 31,000,000 from this source reached the Treasury. In addition to the taxes came the patriotic offerings, which even the Rulers praised as "voluntary" with ironical emphasis. The Treasury received from this source in all about 21,000,000!—but the citizens paid at least ten times this sum to the local Committees. Then came from 25 to 30 millions from the sale of church-plate,[1] 15,000,000 from that of bell-metal, and not quite 200,000,000 from the great compulsory loan levied on the rich; for to this sum it had shrunk, in spite of the severity and terrorism employed in raising it.[2] The amount of the confiscations at this period may be approximately gathered from a consideration of the sale of the national domains. In October 1793 the Government caused a placard to be drawn up, containing a list of the confiscated estates of the *Émigrés* in the Department of Paris. The sheet was so enormous

[1] Cambon, Conv. Nat. November 2. 1794, and Februar 24, 1795. [2] Cambon's fuller report, Conv. Nat. December 13, 1794, and his speech Februar 3, 1795. Johannot 2 Niv. (22. December 1794) income from the national domains 20–24 millions a month.

that the print and paper employed for it cost more than a million francs, and the people had to mount a ladder to read it. In 417 other districts estates of *émigrés* were offered for sale, which were taxed at 1,700 millions; and in April 1794 it was reported to the Convention that not quite a tenth of these—and that at double the estimated price—had been sold for 241 millions. The Treasury, however, derived but little gain from this source, partly because it only came in by small instalments, and partly because, from the great depreciation of paper, the amount was immediately reduced to half its nominal value.

To maintain and raise the price of the *assignats*, therefore, continued to be an object of the greatest solicitude to the Revolutionary Government. The more thoroughly the regular sources of income were dried up—the smaller the amount obtained from extortions of various kinds—the more the Government was obliged to turn its attention to the *assignat*-press as the last resource. Up to the first of January 1793, 3,000 millions of paper money had been brought into circulation; the year 1793 produced an additional mass of equal amount, and the first [1] half of 1794, an increase of 1,000 millions. The exchange, which at the beginning of 1793 stood at 61, fell from week to week, in spite of all penal enactments, to 34, and threatened to sink still further, although all trade in money, and all raising of prices, was watched by 500,000 spies, and threatened with prison and the scaffold. This despotism, like every other, vainly contended against the nature of things. The Committee itself was daily obliged to break its own law of the *maximum*, and to grant enormously usurious prices to unprincipled contractors, and procure specie for its purchases in foreign countries on the hardest conditions. And thus the bales of paper money belonging to the Government melted away under their hands, as quickly

[1] Vid. Ramel, *Les finances de la République Française en l'An IX.*

as the booty of confiscations and requisitions. The Treasury remained empty, although the marrow of the people was drained to the utmost. The armaments cost 180 to 200 millions a month, and the purchases of foreign corn 100 to 120 millions a month;[1] If we only reckon two-thirds of these sums as the real values,[2] we find a larger yearly budget, for these two items alone, than was ever spent under Napoleon I. for the whole administration of the State. For the other departments of public life nothing more was done than occasionally to issue an order, or to assign a sum of money on paper. Indeed all parties united in complaining that the streets and drains had become completely useless from the neglect of repairs[3]—that the forests were desolated in an unexampled manner—that the prisons and hospitals had fallen into ruins, and their inmates exposed to death by starvation.[4] The lawlessness with which the State laid its hand upon the property of the citizens had recoiled upon itself, with desolating effect.

Under such circumstances the taste for labour and the desire of progress among the population was continually dying out. Agriculture was destroyed by the withdrawal of millions of labourers, whose energies were now wasted in the armies, the Clubs, and the Revolutionary Committees; by the withdrawal of capital, which passed either into the coffers of the State, or beyond the frontiers of France; by the destruction

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[1] St. Just's essay in Buchez 35, 294.—Debates in the Convention May 30th, June 19th, July 12th.—Cambon, March 22nd. [2] It is impossible to rate it at a lower figure, as it was just in these two branches that all the specie which the Government possessed was used, in addition to the *assignats*. [3] Conv. Nat. March 11th (Barère), March 16th (Baudot). [4] Conv. Nat. June 14th, July 13th, July 21st debate on the Hospitals.—April 25th Echasseriaux in the Conv. Nat. on the Forests.—The papers of the *Archives de l'Empire* are full of similar statements. "Everybody is suffering from want of fuel, the Admiralty seizes old and young trees, and a regular management of the forests is impossible."

of the cattle, consequent on the ever new and ever increasing requisitions; by the depreciation of all property, which always loses its productive power together with the sanctity of its rights. It was a dispensation of Heaven more important for France than ten victories in the field, that the harvest of this year was earlier and more abundant than had been known in the memory of man—that nature, with overflowing generosity, intervened to restore what the folly and the crime of men had wasted. But even now the complete lock into which affairs had fallen was deeply felt. Men's minds had been so soured and blunted by long oppression, that in hundreds of places the reapers refused to gather in the rich offerings of the soil. An order of Government was once more necessary to secure the harvest, and the requisition of the Committee of Public Safety, backed by threats of death, drove all the inhabitants of the towns into the fields, with the civil and military officers at their head, to house the corn of the surrounding country.

Manufactures, commerce, and the retail trade of the cities, suffered the same fate as agriculture, and from similar causes. The law of the *maximum* first frightened the goods away from the market, and then paralyzed their production. The manufacturer soon found himself proscribed in the Clubs and Revolutionary Tribunals, as formerly the nobleman and the priest. The war had cut the roots of all transmarine and colonial relations, the consequences of which naturally fell with the greatest weight upon the labourers. Their wages continued to fall in consequence of the small demand; those of the tailors, *e. g.* sank to a fourth of the rate of 1790; of the masons to a fifth; of the watercarriers—to whose miserable employment the access was the easiest, and the crowd of aspirants the greatest—to a still lower proportion.[1] And as, at the same time, the price of food rose

[1] St. Aubin, *tableau comparatif des denrées;* Lecoulteux Conv. Nat. 3. December 1795.

in consequence of decreased production, the amount of distress was incalculable. For eight months the people of Bourdeaux had only half a pound of bread per head a day. They filled themselves with couch grass, and now and then with rice, and in the surrounding country the starving wretches fought for the weeds of the fields.[1] Deputations of workmen arrived every week in Paris, to petition the Convention or the Committee of Public Safety for higher wages. "For months past," they said, "we have lived on nothing but bread and cheese." Although the Government endeavoured to procure supplies from all quarters for the capital by the employment of military force, scarcity prevailed on every side. The State was at last compelled literally to mete out his ration to every citizen. No butcher was allowed to buy his meat anywhere but in the city market, where a certain quantity was apportioned to him. The father of a family might only buy one pound of meat per head for his household every ten days, and only received this on bringing a card from the Authorities of his Section. Similar arrangements were made with respect to bread, butter, cheese and eggs. There was no end to the penalties inflicted on those obstinate persons whose appetites were not satisfied by the rations accorded to them.[2] The stock of wine, which was supposed to be very large, in consequence of the good vintage, was suddenly exhausted from another cause; the fact soon afterwards excited notice and discussion in the Committee of Public Safety itself, that so large a quantity of wine had never been consumed as in these years of Revolutionary excitement.[3]

Such was the state of things in a country more favoured by nature than any in Europe. "We had to apprehend," said Robert Lindet in the Convention, three months later,

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[1] Tallien, Conv. Nat. March 12.

[2] In nearly every number of the Moniteur, from April to July.

[3] Robert Lindet's report, Conv. Nat. September 20. 1794.

that the fields would be no longer cultivated, because their occupiers were languishing in prison, or withdrawn from their work as members of Revolutionary Committees. All active industry is ceasing, the necessities of the people are increasing, the consumption is extravagant and wasteful. French commerce presents nothing but ruins, the materials for manufacture are sealed up, all the manufactories, with the exception of those which fabricate the implements of war, have ceased to work. All classes, all districts, are separated from one another; the seeds of dissension have grown up between towns and villages, between artisans and peasants, between neighbouring communes and families. The genius of discord has passed over the length and breadth of the land with desolating footsteps." What Lindet publicly expressed in September was repeatedly discussed in the Committee during the spring, and parties were as much divided by economical questions as by those of foreign policy. They were unanimous enough in regard to single palliative measures, voted millions of *assignats* every month for the support of the poor, forbade all private alms-giving, and issued a decree for the suppression of beggary in the villages. But when measures for the radical cure of the evil were discussed, there was as great a variance of opinion as ever. The majority still regarded all difficulties as the consequence of aristocratic intrigues, and thought that by strictly carrying out the law of the *maximum* they could keep up the value of paper money, and with this inexhaustible resource carry on the government from day to day. Robespierre, as far as we can see, had no opinion of his own on these matters, but his friends Couthon and St. Just were decidedly in favour of a change of system. St. Just disapproved of paper money and compulsory loans, and had spoken strongly against them when they were first proposed, and only gave up his opposition from party considerations. Couthon, too, thoroughly convinced of the untenableness of the present state of things, desired to return to a regular revenue, and a fixed system

of taxation. Thus far their views were much more reasonable than those of the majority, just as Robespierre's criticism of the previous form of government was well grounded enough. But if they obtained the upper hand, what was it that they proposed to substitute for the present justly condemned arrangements?

Couthon founded his hopes on the scheme of one of those political swindlers who spring up by hundreds in agitated times, named Rioux de Maillon, who proposed to save the State by perfecting the law of the *maximum*. This law ordained, as we may remember, that all wares should be sold at half as much again as the average prices of 1790. Maillon, and Couthon, who was completely convinced by his arguments, were of opinion that for the future this added moiety should, in every transaction, be handed over to the State: they were confident that from this source a yearly income of two milliards would be obtained with ease and certainty. Maillon met all statistical ojections to his plan by remarking that the figures brought forward dated from the times of the Monarchy, and therefore furnished no valid argnments for the affairs of the Republic.[1] St. Just on his side had more far-reaching and elaborate schemes. He hoped for the recovery of the State as the result of the comprehensive regeneration of the whole people, which he expected to attain by the institutions already announced. As Robespierre himself declared in favour of the projects of his friend,[2] the fragments of them which have come down to us afford an authentic picture of the future which this party prepared for their country. It will be necessary, therefore, to consider more closely some of the leading features of their system.

"Political institutions," said St. Just,[3] "are the guarantees

[1] From the papers of the Finance Committee in the *Archives de l'Empire*. [2] Vid. *infra* in the speeches of both on the 8th and 9th of Thermidor. [3] St. Just's Essay, which contains a motion and the reasons by which it is supported, will be found in Buchez, Vol. 35 p. 294.

of free governments against the corruption of public morals, and the guarantees of free peoples against the corruption of their governments; if the public morals were good all would go on well; but regulations are necessary to purify them, and when this is done everything will follow of itself." Unfortunately he found the present position of affairs in the highest degree hopeless. "The Revolution", he said, "is benumbed, the principles of men are enfeebled, and one only sees the caps of freedom on the heads of agitators; the carrying-out of the system of terror has dulled the senses of criminals, just as strong drinks deaden the taste of the palate." Paper money appeared to him, in consequence of its quantity and its variation, to be an especial cause of corruption to the morals of the people. Many persons, he said, had become rich by it, and many others beggars, but all had become idle, avaricious, and luxurious. The desire of riches was universal, while wealth was in itself a crime: in a healthy State there must be no rich and no poor, but every citizen must be in possession of a piece of land, just sufficient to supply his wants; for the hand of a man was only intended for the plough or the sword, and every other employment was detestable.[1] No one must be allowed to heap up treasures and thereby diminish the quota of his neighbours: or, as Couthon once expressed it in the Convention, the feelings of men ought to be attuned in such a manner, that they should regard all their wealth as the property of one great family. In accordance with this principle St. Just wished to distribute the National domains among the poor in small lots; and, if these were not sufficient, to compel the landowners to form numerous small farms; every man above 25 years who was neither an official

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[1] *Un homme n'est fait pour le métier ni pour l'hôpital ni pour les hospices: tout cela est affreux. Il ne peut exister de peuple vertueux et libre qu'un peuple agriculteur. Un métier s'accorde mal avec le véritable citoyen: la main de l'homme n'est faite que pour la terre ou pour les armes.*

nor an artisan, was then to cultivate the land himself, and rear four sheep a year upon every acre. The simplicity of rural manners was to be further maintained by a prohibition of all servants, and all gold and silver vessels; no child under 16 years of age was to eat meat at all, and no grown person on three days of the decade; and each citizen was to give in an account of his property every year. In accordance with this census he was then to be called upon to pay the State a tenth of his income, or, if a working man, a fifteenth of his wages, in which case the Government could dispense with every other tax.

Whether this Spartan republic of peasants could be immediately realized in its full extent, appeared doubtful to the didactic self-complacency of the young fanatic. He therefore directed his attention more especially to the rising generation, and, in respect to them, adopted the most comprehensive measures. On reaching their seventh year, all the boys were to be taken away from their parents and handed over to the school of the nation, where they were to be brought up in military discipline, laconic speech, and a life of hardship; and to be instructed in military service, agriculture and languages. St. Just designed to destroy all family life by demanding that marriage should not be proclaimed until after the birth of the first child; that divorce should be free to all, and childless marriages dissolved by law. Instead of the domestic tie, friendship was to be recognized as a public institution. On attaining his 21st year, every citizen was to declare in the temple who were his friends, and he who had no friends was to be banished. Friends were to stand close to one another in battle—to decide the law suits of their associates as umpires—and to be present at the conclusion of every compact. If any one committed a crime, his friends were to be banished.

Until these institutions had attained their object and reared a moral population according to St. Just's views, he thought that the State required either an energetic

Dictator, or virtuous censors, for its salvation.[1] By censors he meant men advanced in years, one of whom should be appointed in every district with a salary of 6,000 livres, without any official power of his own, but with the function of watching the other officials, and bringing accusations against bad rulers. In the present state of things, however, the dictatorship seemed the more appropriate remedy. "Doubtless," said he, the time is not yet come to do what is right;[2] we must wait for a universal disaster, sufficiently great to create a universal longing for what is good; for everything by which good is produced is either terrible or ludicrous, if begun prematurely. In the first place, therefore, he proposed a dictatorship which would increase the prevailing terror to such a degree, that the nation would gladly escape from it to the state of temperance and discipline—without family life, science or wealth—pourtrayed by St. Just. In this State the existing authorities were, for the most part, to be continued, with the addition of the censorship. St. Just, therefore, rejected the monarchy as well as the government of a great numbers of rulers; for a free State the right thing seemed to him to be a supreme governing body consisting of a few member, such as the Committee of Public Safety; provided, of course, that St. Just and Robespierre once more acquired the majority in it.[3]

[1] p. 312. *Il faut dans toute révolution un dictateur pour sauver l'état par la force, ou des censeurs pour le sauver par la vertu.* — [2] p. 290. — [3] That his object in his quarrel with the majority of the Committee was solely the possession of power, not the mitigation of terror, may be proved with documentary certainty from his last work —the draft of his speech on the 9th of Thermidor. The attack which he makes in this address on Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois etc., is based entirely on the one reproach, that the latter contemplated a system of injurious leniency and the weakening of the powers of the revolutionary tribunal. We know only too well that this reproach was unfounded; but it is not the less evident that he who made it had no intention of doing away with the rule of terror. These adversaries were of the same opinion respecting the continuation of tyranny, they only contended for the leadership.

It is not necessary to subject such a system to any searching criticism; let us sum up the whole affair. Under the existing government France had obtained glory and victory abroad, through Carnot's exertions and the disunion of the Powers; while at home, in spite of the most enormous sacrifices, she had been brought to the brink of destruction. A third of her male inhabitants lived on the paper money of the State, to keep up the value of which the other two-thirds were subjected to every kind of robbery and persecution. In the midst of an abundant harvest, death by starvation stared millions in the face day after day; and the Government, which arbitrarily disposed of the blood and treasure of all its subjects, was destitute of money, unity, and order. Robespierre, indeed, intended to give it order and unity, but not, as we now know, by suppressing the system of terror, but by completing it. It is a mere idle excuse of his recent adherents to say that the atrocities of June were committed without his knowledge. It was he who at that time directed the crimes of the Revolutionary Tribunal in Paris; it was he who either directly, or by means of his friends and tools, protected Lebon and urged on Maignet; it was he who incessantly charged his adversaries with attempting to check the operations of the revolutionary tribunal. In the constitution which his party intended to bestow on France, the two levers of indirect communism—paper money and the law of the *maximum*—are not, indeed, found, for the simple reason that they intended to parcel out all landed estates, and to equalise property by a yearly distribution. The disregard of personal rights, therefore, and consequently the system of terrorism, and the desolation of France, would only have been established under their rule in a more equal, universal, and oppressive form.

The two Government Committees opened the discussion demanded by Robespierre on the forenoon of the 22nd of July. Robespierre began with a complaint of the insufficiency of revolutionary justice. The two popular Com-

missions of the 14th of May, he said, were unable to deal with the mass of prisoners, and therefore the other four commissions, provided for in the law of the 12th of Ventose, must at last be constituted. As Robespierre's wish to execute a number of the Deputies was well-known, the majority of the committees had no inclination to extend the powers of the revolutionary tribunal; nevertheless the fear of an open breach still outweighed all other considerations, and the motion was carried without opposition. It was then asked what more was demanded of the Committee; for it was evident that an extraordinary sitting would not have been needed to pass a mere executive measure of an existing law. Robespierre was silent and kept himself in the background. St. Just's friend Lebas threw out a few words respecting the necessity of crushing all the enemies of the people by rapid blows. Again there was a pause in the debate; both parties were afraid to utter the decisive words. St. Just then rose.[1] "You seem depressed," said he, "it is necessary to speak from the heart, and I will begin if you will allow me." He then related, as he alleged from the testimony of the prisoners of war, that Austria expected a speedy overthrow of the "terrible form of government" and the "beneficent tribunals" in France. This, he said, showed what the parties at home were aiming at, and in fact, he had already heard with indignation a talk of the necessity of leniency and consideration. An at-

[1] The follcwing is taken from St. Just's speech (9th Thermidor) and Barère's memoirs. When Louis Blanc and Hamel reject Barére's statements as false, because in one passage he writes Messidor instead of Thermidor (an evident clerical error, since he immediately afterwards remarks, that the scene took place three days before the 8th of Thermidor), they must either have overlooked or forgotten St. Just's own report. St. Just does not indeed speak expressly of Robespierre's dictatorship, but all that he says necessarily applies to it, and thus confirms Barrère's declaration. Conf. the speech of Ruhl, 3rd Germinal III, and the notice in Buchez XXXIII. 359.

tempt was being made to destroy the influence of the best and most capable men, by describing them as tyrants. Such a proceeding, he said, had unfortunately a chance of success, because the Republic lacked institutions from which the political existence of the country might derive a well-guaranteed security. This might be seen in every department of the Administration. The evil was now at its height, and complete anarchy of power and will was already in existence. The Convention, he said, issued laws which were not, and could not be, carried out. The Representatives attached to the armies disposed of the troops according to their whims; and the Conventional Commissioners usurped all power in the Provinces. This endless confusion, he concluded, could only be remedied by concentration of power, unity of Government, and strong institutions.

He paused. "Tell us plainly," cried his hearers, "what all this leads to?" "Well," said he, with his quiet dogmatic phlegm, "I will tell you. A Dictatorship is necessary—not the dictatorship of the Committee of Public Saftey, but of a man who possesses intellect, energy, patriotism and revolutionary experence; who is virtuous, inflexible, and incorruptible. This man is Robespierre. He alone can save the State: I demand that the Committees offer him the Dictatorship to-morrow." The others had foreseen what was coming, but still the impression produced by his actual words was immense. Couthon, David, and Lebas supported their colleague, the rest had doubts and scruples, and quickly roused one another to an unanimous and passionate rejection of the proposal; but even now an open declaration of war was avoided. "We are your friends" said Billaud-Varennes; "we have always gone hand in hand." In spite of the decided part which St. Just had taken, the Committee did not see reason to withdraw the Commission entrusted to him on the preceeding day, or to transfer the task of bringing up the report to the Convention to another member. The position of the two parties was now sharply defined;

they had as it were left their camp and placed themselves in battle-array against each other; but even at the last moment neither side was willing to fire the first shot. The course taken by the majority had this important result, that Robespierre, who had never been a man of sudden and vigorous action, and even St. Just, who was usually in favour of rapid and decisive measures, resolved to observe in their conduct a certain moderation. They still in their hearts destined the Dantonists and Hebertists to death, but with regard to Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and the Committees in general, Robespierre wished to bring a comprehensive charge against their system of administration, without naming individuals. On the following day, however, St. Just, being able to reckon on the compliance of Barère, St. André, Lindet, and the two Prieurs, was to bring charges against Billaud, Collot and Carnot, by name. Yet even then he was not to propose their execution, but, instead of it, the establishment of his own institutions. If he succeeded in this, the power of those whom he impeached would be completely broken, and sufficient time would remain in the future for the postponed application of the guillotine. The more gently and justly they acted for the moment, the more prospect they had of carrying with them the majority of the Convention, and especially the members of the Right.

This party, which had been threatened, persecuted and oppressed, for more than a year, thus regained, by the dissension of its conquerors, an unexpected importance. Robespierre, it is true, made no particular effort to gain them over; after having protected the seventy-three Girondist deputies, he considered himself, in the main, certain of the support of the Right, partly from the timidity they had logn shown, and partly from their bitter hatred against the Hebertists. And, in fact, his calculations on this occasion were correct. Tallien and Fréron, Bourdon and Fouché, terrified out of their wits by the repeated threats of the

dictator, and every night expecting to be arrested—so that they continually changed their sleeping quarters—appealed several times to the men of the Right with urgent prayers for help, and eager proposals for a last struggle for deliverance. But the leaders of the Right, Champeaux, Boissy-d'Anglas, and Durand-Maillane, considered these proposals highly hazardous. Danton's example had taught them how easily the radical chiefs became reconciled to one another at the cost of the moderate party: every movement was with them a throw for life and death, and they might well ask whether the substitution of Collot d'Herbois for Robespierre was worth such a heavy stake. Twice, therefore within a few days they rejected the petitions of the threatened Montagnards.

On the 25th of July—the 7th Thermidor in the republican Calendar—a numerous deputation of Jacobins appeared in the Convention, to open the impending contest in the traditional manner. Robespierre had succeeded in completely subjecting the Jacobin Club to his will, principally through the agency of his brother, Couthon, and Lebas, while St. Just maintained his post in the midst of the hostile Committee of Public Safety. In accordance with Couthon's propositions, the deputation complained of the rise of a new moderate party, demanded the inexorable administration of revolutionary justice, praised the purity of the Convention, which, they said, was only sullied by the presence of a few criminals, and concluded with a complaint of the military Commissioner Pillé, who stripped Paris of the patriotic artillery-men, and concealed his operations in suspicious obscurity. On the day following, Robespierre, amidst general and breathless suspense, asked permission to open his oppressed and lacerated heart to the Convention. In a long address he then complained that he was falsely denounced, as a man aiming at despotism and the murder of several deputies. He said that, on the contrary, he was the slave of Freedom, a living martyr of the Republic, the victim

and the enemy of all criminals. Ever since the Festival of the Supreme Being, he complained, the attacks against him had begun, and people had sought to undermine the great bulwark of Freedom, the Revolutionary Tribunal. The finances of the Republic were ruined by the party which he opposed, as well as by Cambon and Ramel; foreign affairs were neglected, the nation involved deeper and deeper in the bloodiest of wars by academical flowers of speech, and the army left in a state of independence dangerous to freedom. It was indispensable, he said in conclusion, to purify the Committees, to strengthen and simplify the Government; the justice of the people must be empowered to punish hypocritical criminals also, and, after their suppression, to introduce certain moral and political institutions, which would protect good citizens, without crippling the operations of national justice.

The Convention listened to this speech in deep silence, expecting every moment to hear the names of the victims, and were surprised at the conclusion, that Robespierre had brought forward no definite motion. The terror inspired was still so great, that one of his opponents, Lecointre of Versailles, proposed that the speech should be printed; and the Convention—after Couthon had angrily put down all objections—unanimously decreed that it should be published and sent to all the Departments. At this moment, however, Cambon's impetuosity broke through all bounds. "Before I am dishonoured," he cried, "I will speak to the nation." He defended his financial measures, and growing more violent and bitter in the course of his speech, he concluded by crying out: "A single man cripples the labours of the Government, and that man is Robespierre!" The ice was now broken, Billaud-Varennes and others came to his aid; it was demanded that Robespierre's speech should be referred to the Committees before being printed, and at the same time the cry was repeated louder and louder, that Robespierre should name the evil-doers whose death he

sought, and thereby calm the fears of the guiltless. This had more effect than anything else on the minds of the Right; reports were spread that Robespierre intended to spare only twenty-one members out of the whole Convention. When Robespierre obstinately refused to give any explanations, the opinion prevailed that it were better not to come to a decision on the present day, and the decree respecting the printing of the speech was revoked by a large majority. It was just in this light that Robespierre viewed the result of the sitting; the Convention, he believed, had only wished to adjourn its vote; he by no means considered himself defeated, and had still an unshaken confidence in the greater portion of the assembly. In the evening he hastened with his friends to the Jacobin Club, where the men of the Hôtel de Ville were inpatiently awaiting his appearance in dense crowds. He was received with noisy applause, read his speech for the second time, and could hardly finish it, from the acclamations which broke forth at every strong expression. Several voices demanded a repetition of the 31st of May, a new revolt of the Hôtel de Ville against the Convention, and Robespierre expressed himself satisfied that the Convention should once more be cleared of the rascals who had hitherto oppressed it. "But first of all," cried Couthon, "it is necessary that the Club should recover its own purity." Consequently he demanded the exclusion of all criminal deputies, of all those who in the morning had voted against the publication of the speech. Collot-d'Herbois and Billaud Varennes were present, and saw the storm thereby directed against themselves. Without any opposition, and amidst noisy acclamation, Couthon's motion was carried, and wild cries were raised round the proscribed members bidding them withdraw. It was in vain that Collot once more appealed to Robespierre, praying for reconciliation: "We all love you," said he, "you are wrong to be angry, we will all stand together in defence of the Committee." Robespierre never moved a muscle, the clamour of

the crowd became more threatening, Billaud was seized by the collar, Collot saw knives raised against him, and it was with difficulty that they reached the door. It was now nearly midnight; and the Club continued its sitting for some time longer. Propositions of ever-increasing violence were made in quick succession, but Robespierre warned them not to go beyond the example of May 31st; and Henriot forthwith issued orders to several battalions of the National guard to hold themselves in readiness at 7 o'clock in the morning.[1] Robespierre still rested his hopes on the Right, and thought that a gentle pressure from without would secure him the majority; he told his landlord, who received him on his return from the Club with lively anxiety: "The Convention is pure, calm yourself, I have nothing to fear."

But at the very moment when he was praising the prop on which he rested, it broke beneath his hand. After Robespierre's speech the Montagnards saw their own ruin close at hand, and spent the day and night in convulsive restlessness. Fréron, Cambon, and Lecointre, hurried from place to place in Paris, heard of Henriot's orders to the National guard, and the preparations of the Hôtel de Ville, and kept running, one after the other, to the Committee of Public Safety to procure an order for the arrest of the traitors, and to ask protection for themselves. Tallien, Bourdon, and some others, in the excess of their anxiety, once more appealed to Boissy d'Anglas and Durand-Maillane, The decisive moment, they said, had arrived; they were all lost unless they got the start of the tyrant; everything depended on a decree of the Convention; the Right, which could turn the scale, would be answerable for all the blood which Robespierre designed to shed. Boissy d'Anglas was a man of cool consideration and firm convictions; he saw that the matter was becoming serious, and once convinced of this, he did not long hesitate. He abhorred the men

[1] Lecointre. Conv. that August 29. Other details are not well authenticated.

who were now cringing to him for help, no less than he did Robespierre himself; but he abhorred the dominant system still more than the persons, and it was clear that this would not fall with Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes, but with Robespierre. For it was Robespierre who swayed the Ministries and the Revolutionary Tribunals, the Jacobin Club and the Municipality of Paris. The state of things was such that these main pillars of the Reign of Terror must be involved in his fall, while his victory would extend its sway still more unboundedly. In accordance with this simple but decisive consideration, Boissy and Durand promised to support the Mountain in their opposition to Robespierre in the next sitting.

While this important turn in affairs was taking place, the Committee of Public Safety was passing the night in a state of no less excitement. Barère, Carnot, Prieur and Lindet were present, with St. Just. They began by transacting the current business, but in the excited state of their minds their discussions continually came to a stand-still. At last Barère broke the ice by calling on St. Just to bring the report—which he had undertaken on the 22nd—before the Committee for their sanction. St. Just declined doing so on the ground that he had not the documents with him, and excited suspicion by declining to communicate the motion which he intended to found upon it. At this crisis Billaud and Collot returned from the Jacobin Club half mad with rage and excitement. When St. Just coldly demanded what was going on at the Club, Collot screamed out. "Do you ask such a question, you accomplice of Robespierre, Triumvir, assassin!" A violent quarrel arose, in which reference was again made to the report, and St. Just at last declared that he intended to attack some of his colleagues, but without proposing to prosecute them. "Robespierre," said he, "knows all your movements, he knows how Collot holds intercourse with Fouché, and how Fouché is working against us." The others cried out that

all that was calumny, while the treacherous design of the Municipality to use violence against the Convention was a matter of certainty. Collot demanded the immediate arrest of Fleuriot, Payan and Henriot; whereupon St. Just raised such a violent opposition, that the noise of the quarrel penetrated to the antechamber. At last, at day-break, Billaud proposed, by way of compromise, to summon the city officials in question to the meeting place of the Committee of Public Safety for the day, and St. Just, who could raise no objection, left them with a promise to return at 11 o'clock, and to read his report. But the Mayor, who was on the point of raising the standard of revolt, drove away the messenger of the Committee with abuse, and even before 11 o'clock a short note arrived from St. Just. "You lacerated my heart last night," he wrote, "I shall open it to the Convention." Crying out that they were betrayed, they hurried to the sitting, in which the game was to be played on which their lives were staked. The Deputies were assembled in unusally large numbers; before the sitting commenced Moderates and Montagnards mingled in the adjoining rooms and passages; Bourdon pressed Durand's hand with the words. "O the brave men of the Right!" Tallien was about to join them, when through the opened door he saw St. Just already in the rostra. "The moment is come," he cried, "we must make an end!"

"I belong to no faction," said St. Just, "I will oppose them all. They will never cease until institutions are created which will set bounds to the power of the State, and once for all subdue the pride of man. In the existing circumstances, this rostra will be, perhaps, the Tarpeian rock for the man who tells you that the members of the Government have forsaken the path of wisdom. But I think that I am bound to tell you the truth at any risk. Both the Government Committees entrusted me with a report; their confidence did me honour, but some one has torn my heart to-night, and I will open it to you." Tallien here interrupted

him. "I have a motion of order to make," cried he. "What a calamity weighs upon the commonwealth! We see nothing but division. Yesterday a member of the Government spoke singly and in his own name, and to-day another does the same; new attacks may be looked for, the country will be driven into the abyss; I demand that the veil should be torn away." Loud and long continued applause followed these words. Billaud-Varennes rose to complain of what had taken place the day before in the Jacobin Club, and the arbitrary conduct of St. Just towards the Committee; he then broke out against Robespierre, spoke of his ambition, declared that he gave appointments to noblemen, that he had for a long time protected the traitor Danton, and tyrannised over the Committee for months past. "We will all die with honour," he cried "for there is not a man here who would wish to live under a tyrant." Robespierre rushed to the rostra, but was received with the general cry "away with the tyrant!" Tallien again spoke, and demanded the arrest of Henriot and his staff, and proposed that the Convention should sit *en permanence* until tyranny was overthrown. Things were come to such a pass, that this man, who had once led the September assassins, and slaughtered hundreds of victims in Bordeaux, proclaimed the necessity of confining the Revolutionary Tribunal within the limits of decency and justice, and restoring the freedom of the press in France. The arrest of Henriot and Dumas was decreed on the spot, and all the attempt of Robespierre to get a hearing were drowned in the furious cries of the Assembly. Barère then carried a motion abolishing the office of Commander-in-chief of the National Guard, and making the Mayor responsible with his head for the peace of the capital. Vadier and Tallien once more brought back the discussion to the delinquencies of Robespierre; the latter stood close by them on the rostra, but every word which he uttered was interrupted by murmurs. He then turned to the Mountain and saw nothing but faces filled with deadly hatred to-

wards himself: "I appeal to you," he said, turning to the Right, "whose hands are clean, and not to the villains." But he only called forth a fresh roar of indignation. "President of the assassins," he then cried, "I demand to be heard." Fury deprived him of speech: "The blood of Danton chokes him," cried Garnier. The time was come: a hitherto unknown deputy, Louchet, spoke the fatal words, and proposed that Robespierre should be arrested. A moment of speechless surprise followed this motion, which on the preceding day would have been an unheard of crime. But in a few minutes a constantly increasing murmur of applause ran through the Assembly, and cries of "divide" resounded from all sides. Robespierre experienced the same fate which he had prepared for thousands,—that of being condemned without legal forms, without being heard in his own defence, without a judicial sentence. In wild despair he struggled in vain against the stream, alike unable to resist its force, or to regain his self-possession. It was left to his friends to lend dignity to the fall of their cause; nor were they unequal to the task. St. Just regarded the tumult in contemptuous silence; Couthon confessed to every charge that was brought against him; and the younger Robespierre and Lebas themselves demanded to be included in the honourable sentence. After a long and violent debate, a resolution was come to amidst far-sounding cries of "Vive la liberté! Vive la Republique!", and the five Deputies were led away to different prisons. Almost at the same time, about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, Henriot too, who, accompanied by a few gendarmes, had been scouring the streets, and rousing the people to revolt against the Convention, was arrested. The sitting was then adjourned to 7 o'clock.

The real struggle, however, was still to come.[1] Ever

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[1] For the following details the official protocol of the Municipality published in Buchez has been hitherto used. It was indeed written

since the morning, the Jacobin Club and the Municipality, as well as the Convention, had been in full consultation. In the two former bodies the plan assumed a more and more definite shape, of surrounding the Convention, as on the 2nd of June, with battalions of the National Guard, and imperatively demanding the annihilation of Robespierre's opponents. In the course of the afternoon the Municipality sent one of their members into each of the Sections to prepare men's minds—issued a manifesto in which they set forth the praises of Robespierre, Couthon and St. Just—and collected the artillery force of the National Guard, on which, as they supposed, they could entirely rely. At 6 o'clock in the evening they received intelligence of the measures of the National Convention. The Mayor immediately proposed to summon once more the men of the 10th of August to the Hôtel de Ville; and raising on high the tables on which the "Rights of man" were inscribed, he declared, that when the Government violated them, rebellion was a sacred duty. The state of feeling, however, was one of depression; it was observed that the galleries were not filled, and emissaries were sent into the Place to bring in a mass of enthusiastic hearers. The list, too, in which some of the members had inscribed their names suddenly disappeared, and the Secretaries, who had to take down the minutes of the proceedings, declared that they wished to go home to dinner. The bolder spirits saw that they must no longer hesitate, if the defection was not to became general; they therefore caused the tocsin to be sounded, sent to the prison to liberate Henriot and the incarcerated Deputies, and hastened to arm themselves, and to deal the decisive blow

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during the sitting, but immediately afterwards modified according to party views. The *Archives de l'Empire*, on the other hand, contain the observations of the secretary of the Hôtel de Ville, which were officially recorded on the following day, and in which the facts are given simply and without disguise.

against the Convention as quickly as possible. The younger Robespierre was the first to make his appearance among them, and was received with joyful embraces. The older Robespierre had been brought to the Bureau of Police, and refused to come on the first invitation; he wished to appear, like Marat, before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and hoped for a splendid and victorious acquittal. But on the second summons, which announced the liberation of Couthon and St. Just, his resolution gave away, and his arrival raised the zeal of his adherents to the highest pitch. A Committee of Twelve was chosen to conduct the revolt, several persons were arrested in the Hôtel de Ville itself, since even here some voices were raised in favour of the Convention; and Henriot, who was also now at liberty, was ordered to lead the attack on the Convention. The latter had recommenced its sittings at the appointed hour, and was surprised by one piece of evil tidings after another in rapid succession. The certainty of the destruction, however, which awaited them in case of failure sustained their minds. On receiving intelligence of the commencement of the insurrection, the Convention denounced outlawry against all insubordinate authorities, and all who neglected to carry out their orders of arrest—appointed the Deputy Barras, who had formerly been an officer in the army, commander of the armed force—and sent Commissioners into all the Sections, to make sure of the support of the citizens. These measures had their full and immediate effect. The elements which could alone have saved him, Robespierre had himself destroyed, four months before, by the overthrow of the Hebertists. At that period the bands which had once overpowered the King on the 10th of August, and the Convention on the 2nd of June, had been deprived of their leaders and destroyed. The mass of the population had now no other wish than for repose and personal freedom, and saw in Robespierre the hated originator and chief of the Reign of Terror. Even Henriot's artillery-men, whom he

had just ordered to direct their cannon against the Tuileries, left him in the lurch when the ban was proclaimed, so that he was compelled to flee in all haste to his associates at the Hôtel de Ville. The National Guard turned out with the greatest readiness from the Sections, for the protection of the Convention; by midnight all danger was over, and the victorious party could now prepare for the final attack. Legendre led a column against the Jacobins; dispersed the Club without much difficulty, and closed their meeting-place. Leonard Bourdon, with two other bodies of men, moved upon the Hôtel de Ville. Here, in the great hall, the Robespierrists were awaiting in silence the result of the appeal to the Sections. Robespierre and his more intimate friends had withdrawn to an adjoining room for private consultation. Suddenly several shots were heard in the hall, and a terrible report spread like wild fire that Robespierre had taken his own life. On receiving the intelligence that the National Guard had everywhere decided for the Convention, St. Just and Lebas called on their chief to go forth in person and lead his few faithful followers to attack the Convention. When Robespierre, broken in spirit, refused compliance, Lebas, who on the previous day had already expected an unfavourable issue, cried—"Well then, there is nothing left for us but to die." He had a pair of pistols with him, one of which he handed to Robespierre, and shot himself with the other at the same moment.[1] St. Justr emained on this occasion and during the whole day, in a state of gloomy repose, but Robespierre put his weapon to his mouth, and pulled the trigger with an unsteady finger; in his hesitation he shattered his chin, but did not wound himself mortally. Almost at the same moment Leonard Bourdon led his troops into the Hôtel de Ville, where the City-party, in their wild confusion and despair, were unable to decide on any common course of action. The

[1] "Lebas" in Buchez 35.

younger Robespierre jumped out of the window on to the pavement, but was still alive when he was seized below. Henriot was thrown through the panes by one of his own party, who was enraged at his want of self-possession, and fell upon a heap of rubbish only slightly wounded. They were all arrested within a few minutes. After the declaration of outlawry there was no need of any further judicial proceedings, but it was not until the afternoon that the preparations for their execution had been completed. Robespierre had been laid on a table, with a box under his wounded head: he remained still and silent, and only moved to wipe the blood, which flowed copiously from his face, with pieces of paper; he heard nothing about him but words of wrath and triumph, yet he never moved a muscle, and regarded his persecutors with fixed and glassy eyes. At last the carts arrived to bear him and his twenty-one companions to the place of execution. On the scaffold the executioner tore away the scanty bandage from his head, and then he uttered a shrill cry of pain, the first sound which had proceeded from him since his arrest, and the last. On the following day 71 members of the Municipality followed him to death; the Reign of Terror ended in a terrible sea of blood.

What was to come next, no man was able to foresee; meanwhile the victory over the fallen faction was, of course, completed, and made the most of in every way. At every sitting of the Convention, during many weeks, new objects of impeachment, prosecution, and proscription, were continually found. Orders were issued for a thorough sifting of the officials in the popular and ministerial Committees; and the operations of the Revolutionary Tribunal were suspended until the present members should he superseded by others. At this point, however, the alliance by which Robespierre had been defeated was dissolved. The Moderates of the Right, who demanded the immediate suppression of the Tribunal, were opposed by the members of the Com-

mittee of Public Safety with revolutionary zeal. But the latter only thereby directed the efforts of the majority immediately against themselves, and the Convention, amidst overpowering applause, raised the cry that they must above all things free themselves from the tyranny of the Committee of Public Safety. In rapid succession the obnoxious enactment of 22 Prairial was annulled, a thorough re-modelling of the two Committees taken in hand, and a provision made, that at the end of every month a fourth part of the members should retire, and not become eligible for re-election until after the lapse of another month. It is true that the immediate object was hereby attained, and the omnipotence of the Committee over the Convention destroyed. But if, even in the previous state of things, practical men had bitterly complained of disorder and confusion in the Government, it was evident that the new system made all consistency of action, and regular conduct of business, utterly impossible; and the stagnation was all the more felt, because it remained for a considerable time doubtful, which of the two parties would gain the upper hand. And thus the late absolute rule was followed by complete impotence, and public opinion at once gained a power such as it had hardly possessed even in the first days of the Revolution. But the difference in its direction in 1789 and in 1794 was immeasurable. At the former period public opinion was led by the democratic party, which was backed by the hopes and affections of an infinite majority of the whole nation. At the latter, this party was confused and disorganised by inward strife, and had become an object of abhorrence to the nation, from the fearful abuse which it had made of its power. The cry ran through Paris, and soon through the whole of France, and daily became louder and more passionate, that the time of violence, robbery and murder was over. Numerous journals which had been suppressed appeared again after the 9th of Thermidor, and gave expression to the popular voice in vigorous manifestoes;

The *suspects* were already liberated by hundreds, the law of the *maximum* was everywhere disregarded, and the uncompromising punishment of the great criminals was loudly called for. The Government meanwhile did not venture to interfere, either to hinder or to aid.

The complete paralysis which had befallen the French Government made itself felt in a remarkable degree in foreign affairs. The war had slackened on all the frontiers since Carnot had retired from the Committee of Public Safety. The case was no better with the diplomatic relations, which Robespierre was on the point of forming at the moment of his fall. No great progress had indeed, been made, in negotiation with any of the Powers. A certain inclination to come to an agreement existed on either side, and this had a powerful effect upon the events of the war; but no binding engagement had been entered into, and scarcely a preliminary step had been taken. And thus the catastrophe of the 9th of Thermidor threw everything back into a state of complete uncertainty, and the fate of Poland took a more prominent place than ever in the complicated affairs of Europe.

CHAPTER II.

TAKING OF CRACOW.

RUSSIA'S WARLIKE ZEAL AGAINST POLAND.—PRUSSIA'S TASK IN POLAND.—WEAKNESS OF THE POLISH ARMY.—USELESS ENGAGEMENT AT SKALA.—REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN WARSAW.—RUSSO-PRUSSIAN PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN.—BATTLE OF RAWKA.—THE PRUSSIANS TAKE CRACOW.—FOURTEEN DAY'S TRUCE.—MASSACRES IN THE PRISONS OF WARSAW.—KOSCIUSKO FALLS OUT WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.—THE PRUSSIANS AND RUSSIANS BEFORE WARSAW.—DIVISIONS IN THE CAMP.—DISPUTE BETWEEN ENGLAND AND PRUSSIA CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE RHINE ARMY.—TREVES TAKEN BY THE FRENCH.—SPENCER AND GRENVILLE GO TO VIENNA TO URGE ON FRESH MILITARY PREPARATIONS.—LUCCHESINI IN VIENNA IS SAID TO ADVOCATE PEACE WITH FRANCE.—RAISING OF THE SIEGE OF WARSAW.

IN St. Petersburg, and thoughout the whole of Russia, there was but one feeling of wrath against Poland—one cry for vengeance. The domineering pride of the Empress, the old national antipathy of the Russian people, and the honour of the army, had been excited and wounded in the highest degree by the Warsaw massacre. No one thought of peace, and in spite of all burdens and dangers it seemed a matter of course that the stain on the Russian arms could only be wiped out by the total annihilation of Poland. Catharine was most of all possessed by this idea, but she, too, saw most clearly the difficulties and uncertainties of the case. The defeats in Poland laid open the deficiencies of the Russian military system in a most alarming manner; it was with the greatest difficulty that 30,000 disposable troops

of reserve could be raised in the vast Empire, and these could not reach the theatre of war in less than five or six weeks. Soltikoff's army had to furnish a large proportion of this force, and this rendered it the less possible to call upon Suworow for aid, as he had now almost single-handed to protect the Southern frontier against the Turks; for who could answer for it that the Turks would not now seek vengeance for the threats which had been hurled against them? The intelligence from Constantinople was doubtful and contradictory; Russia no longer dared to look for a secure peace from that quarter. After Stael had concluded the above-mentioned league of armed neutrality with Denmark, the Russian Government had joyfully accepted the offer made by a party of the Swedish nobility, led by the handsome, hotblooded, and foolhardy Baron Armfeldt, to overthrow the Regent and Reuterholm by a powerful conspiracy, if Catharine would support them by sending her fleet before Stockholm. But the plan was prematurely discovered; Armfeldt only just escaped the hands of the police, and as the Swedish Government prosecuted him with bitter hatred, and the Allied Courts obstinately refused to give him up, he became the subject of several diplomatic paper-wars of unexampled violence. In Warsaw, on the other hand, the Swedish ambassador was on the best footing with the new rulers, so that both Poles and Russians looked for an active intervention on the part of Sweden, if the slightest occasion should offer itself.

Under these untoward circumstances the eyes of the Empress were turned with all the more anxiety to her two great allies, the German Powers. It was in bitter earnest that, immediately after the disaster of Warsaw, she claimed both in Berlin and Vienna the armed assistance guaranteed to her by treaty. It is true that in the state of her inclinations at this period, she would have wished for a different result than that which she, in the first instance, attained. Austria, her secret ally against the Turks, and on

whom she had hitherto bestowed all her favour, appeared at first to have no taste for Polish, but only for Belgian, contests; while troublesome Prussia, who had already extended her dominion so widely in Poland, set a powerful army in motion with eager haste, under the command of the King in person. Yet nothwithstanding her preference for the one, Catharine could not but rejoice that the other Power was occupying the forces of Kosciusko for the moment, and thereby giving the Russians time for their preparations. These were now carried on in all directions with the greatest energy. General Derfelden marched with a corps of Soltikoff's army from the Ukraine towards the North, against Brzesc and Slonim; its nominal strength was 30,000, but it really contained less than a quarter of that number. Prince Repnin, who had been appointed Commander-in-chief in the room of Igelström, had arrived in Riga, and brought up 6,000 men under General Nummsen, to reinforce the bodies of Russian troops which still existed in Lithuania. All that were left of the Russian garrison of Warsaw—about 7,000 men[1]—were stationed not far from the Prussian frontiers near Lowicz. After the defeat of Raclawice, General Denisow had retired towards Opatow, in the district of Sendomir, where his force was increased to 8,500 men;[2] in the beginning of May General Fersen was set over these troops, and meanwhile Denisow was intructed likewise to approach the Prussian borders, and form a junction with Favrat's corps. Russia, as we see, made the greatest exertions to collect and strengthen her forces for the contest; and at the same time veiled her purposes and aims in cautious secresy, though the Prussian Ambassador in St. Petersburg was perpetually endeavouring to sound them. Catharine was resolved on no account to make any binding declarations, until she had come to a full understanding with Austria; and as Francis II. was absent in

[1] Pistor 194. — [2] Treskow 62.

Belgium, several months passed away before this could be arrived at.

The position of affairs was therefore extremely favourable to Prussia, who, at the beginning of May, had 50,000 well trained troops in the immediate neighbourhood of the decisive points. Her course was marked out as clearly as possible. In former years there might have been a doubt whether she ought not to support Poland against Russia, and seek her own advantage in alliance with the former; but now every possibility of hesitation was cut off, and she was bound by every consideration to bring all her forces into rapid action. Kosciusko had declared war against Prussia as well as Russia; and though he afterwards made secret proposals for neutrality, it was well known that the whole of South Prussia was in a state of ferment, and that on Kosciusko's appearance it would break out into open rebellion. Nay, in spite of the bloody days of Warsaw, no one could maintain that any change had taken place in the feelings of the Poles—who, in 1793, had after all preferred the Russian to the German yoke—in favour of Prussia. Mutual hatred had glowed in the minds of Poles and Prussians for centuries, and though this enmity brought destruction on Poland, and no advantage to Germany, it existed, and Prussia could not go back. Nothing was left but to proceed, and to protect her own interests, amid the ruins of the fallen Polish Empire, against her hostile friends and her envious neighbours. The word Partition had not as yet passed the lips of the two Courts, but the thought of it pervaded the whole atmosphere in St. Petersburg as well as Berlin, in the camps as well as the cabinets; it was certain that it would come to this, and the only question was as to the manner in which it would be carried out. What Prussia must wish and aim at, in such a case, was self-evident. For the possessor of Breslau, Posen, and Königsberg, nature had unmistakably marked out the banks of the Niemen, the Narew, and the Vistula, as the only safe

boundary line. It was no less certain that Austria would protest against such an aggrandisement of her rival, and it was at least probable, that Catharine would support her against Prussia. The less able the latter was to compete with the two Imperial courts in material power, the more incumbent it was upon her to increase her own weight by rapid and resolute action. She could evidently assume a very different tone if she crushed the Polish insurrection by victorious arms, and seized the desired district with a strong hand, than if she had first to ask it of the goodwill of her allies. And we have seen that Manstein and Lucchesini had unfolded a military and diplomatic plan to the King of this nature.

If the attack of the Prussians had been made with all energy in May, in accordance with these views, Kosciusko would have been as little able as Catharine to frustrate the wishes of the King. For the state of things in Poland was wretched in the extreme, and there was no real power of resistance in any quarter. Kosciusko, full of patriotism and military genius, was destitute of the political experience, and the demagogic recklessness, which his position demanded at that time perhaps in an equal degree. The temper of his mind was calm and naturally serious; he was entirely free from all selfish and vulgar passions, from hatred, self-seeking, and revenge, and could only be excited by the glowing desire of heroic fame. He had entered on his great undertaking from a feeling of duty, without much hope, and was fully prepared at every moment for destruction. But this feeling had no effect on his activity, on his self-sacrificing devotion; it only strengthened in him his natural bent, not to sully a desperate cause, for the sake of any transitory advantage, by deeds of injustice or violence. During the first weeks of the revolt he had ordered a partisan of the Russians to be hung; but afterwards nothing could induce him to adopt any terrorising measures. His object was to purify and elevate the sensual indolence and flickering im-

petuosity of his countrymen by the stimulus of patriotism and religion, and to reconcile parties by directing their thought to the interests of their common country. But on the men among whom he lived, such ideal and gentle motives had no effect, and his efforts remained futile, because he would not support them by the incitements of selfishness, or by fear and terror. He was constantly occupied with the levy *en masse,* but was hindered at every step by the ill-will of the nobles, and the dull apathy of the peasants. It was of no avail that his agents offered the peasants freedom and land; the only effect was, that the nobles turned away with tenfold indignation from the destroyer of their property. They directed their serfs, on the appearance of the patriotic regiments, to flee to the woods, and they themselves emigrated in great numbers to Galicia. And thus Kosciusko's army increased very slowly; in the begining of May he had perhaps 12,000 men near Cracow, while to the west of that city Favrat collected an equal number of Prussians at Czenstochau, and in the east General Denisow cut him off from the right bank of the Vistula, from Lublin and Chelm, and from the troops of Grochowski. His communication with the latter appeared to the Polish General of the very greatest moment; he resolved, therefore, to trust to Favrat's tardiness, to mask, rather than to defend, Cracow against the Prussians by 3,000 scythe-men, and to march with his main force up the Vistula against Denisow. But it soon appeared that he would not be able single-handed to overpower even the Russians. He saw himself, therefore, compelled to take up a strong position near Polaniec behind redoubts, with the Vistula on his flank, and a deep trench in his front, until Grochowski should come up on his side, and thus take Denisow between two fires. The two armies thus lay opposite each other until the middle of May, in a state of almost complete inaction, until Grochowski with 7,000 men, after an exhausting march, crossed the Vistula, and Denisow,

to avoid being taken in the rear, hastily retreated to the north-west, and approached the Prussian frontier, as he had long ago been commanded to do. As Kosciusko hereupon immediately formed a junction with Grochowski, and then followed the track of the Russians, a decisive battle seemed on the point of being fought. For, about the same time, General Favrat had also advanced; he entered the territory of the Republic, on the 10th of May, with 11,000 men, and might easily have reached Cracow, which was almost undefended, in a few days' march, and taken possession of all the supplies, depôts and money. But the Polish General had formed a correct opinion of his opponent. Favrat was full of that kind of caution to which the Duke of Brunswick's owed his fame in the Prussian Staff, and his failures in the Prussian wars. When safe in his quarters he racked his brains in devising plans for marches and battles, by means of which he hoped to crush every enemy who encountered him; but in the field, unfortunately, he found that he could not move, and much less fight, because his army had no well-regulated baking establishment, nay, not even the normal quantity of cooking utensils. It was not, therefore, until the 18th that he made up his mind to attack the body of Cracovians, which Kosciusko had drawn up at Skala about two leagues in front of Cracow. The result was such as might have been expected: after the first shots the peasants ran away so quickly that the victors only made a single prisoner. But Favrat was angry because he had not been able completely to carry out his plan of battle; he had wished to exterminate the peasants, and then, as he reported, to have marched directly upon Cracow. As it was he remained quietly on the scene of the late action till the 19th, and on the 20th he made the firing of an alarm gun, which led to no further consequences, an excuse for quietly retreating behind the river Pilica. He was there visited by General Denisow in person, who tried to induce him to form a junction of their respective corps, and then to

engage in what he hoped would be a decisive battle. But Favrat once more made various objections, and lastly declared that it was not fit that he should end the war, as the King might be expected daily. And thus Kosciusko gained a complete truce until the 3rd of June, a period incalculably important to him for his preparations.

While Kosciusko in the south was carrying on a constant, wearisome, and hopeless struggle with foreign armies, and the opposition of his own countrymen, the waves of revolution were running as high as ever in Warsaw.[1] The Provisional Government had kept about 1,200 troops of the line in the capital, and had sent out all the rest in small bodies towards the Narew, and to Lowicz and Rawa, to watch the Prussian frontier, and to strengthen themselves by recruits from among the peasants, With the same view General Mokranowski, the military chief of the capital, had thrown up a number of entrenchments round Warsaw, which were then armed with artillery from the Arsenal. Whoever did not wish to pass for a friend of the Russians was obliged to use pickaxe and spade for a few days at least, and even King Stanislaus, to satisfy the zeal of his subjects, threw a few spadefuls of earth on the new bastions. He did not, indeed, gain much by this; no one looked for any honourable resolution from his weakness, and the Provisional government vied with the mob in manifesting their hostile suspicion of him. He was constantly under the surveillance of two communal officers, and more than once the noisy populace prevented him from taking his walks, which they looked on as a pretext for treacherous flight. Still worse fared the nobles whose connection with Russia was proved, either by their conduct at the last Diet, or by the

[1] Besides Zajonczek's report, and the well-informed correspondent of the *Political Journal*, I have made use in the following details of the despatches of the Russian ambassador Buchholz and the Dutchman Griesheim.

captured papers of Igelström. The execution of the Kossokowskis was immediately followed by fresh and numerous arrests; Igelström's former favourite, Colonel Bauer had been taken prisoner in the Warsaw revolt, and in his cowardly fear of death he readily denounced all the members of the former Russian party, or any one else whom the new Rulers wished to destroy under this title. Universal terror therefore prevailed, and it was all the more difficult to re-establish order on a firm footing, because the people were armed to the teeth, and yet by no means reduced to military discipline. As usual in such a state of affairs, those who possessed property, or were engaged in trade, very soon withdrew from the disagreeable tumult of war, and only the dregs of the population wandered about, clattering their sabres in merry and greedy license, playing the part of revolutionary police against bad patriots, and taking excellent care of themselves at the expense of the sighing citizens; who, without a thought of national liberation, only wavered between their vexation at the disorderly excesses of the mob, and their fear of a Russian tribunal. They bore with grief the patriotic burdens and offerings which were imposed upon them in quick succession—the sending in of their silver plate to the mint—the delivering up of their horses to the army—the maintenance of recruits who passed through the city—the exaction of a quarter of their income—and soon afterwards the payment of their taxes for the three next years in advance. Traffic and trade came to a complete stand-still: for what the measures of the Powers had not done to obstruct them, the Provisional government itself did, by forbidding the export of all articles necessary for the war, and especially of provisions.

At the end of May the state of the capital became still more complicated. On the 10th Kosciusko had at last received intelligence of the revolution in Warsaw, and had sent thither his most distinguished adherents, Ignatius Potocky and Hugo Kollontai, to form a government in that

city worthy of the greatness of the cause. They arrived on the 18th and immediately took the supreme direction of affairs. They were at first received with unanimous joy by the people, but they were too soon separated by the world-wide difference of their dispositions, so that their presence was not the beginning of well-founded order, but only of new and dangerous distractions. Potocky, a scion of one of the richest and most powerful families in the land, had, at an early period, shown personal merits worthy of his high condition. His intellect was many-sided, quick and active; and as he was originally intended for the priest hood he had received at Rome a careful education, and acquired far more extensive knowledge than was usual amongst the Polish nobles. He had, moreover, the easy grace and warmth of manner, peculiar to his nation, in the highest degree; but he had also what the majority of his countrymen had lost, a natural inclination towards everything great and noble, and an innate disgust at vulgarity and selfishness. Amidst the immoral and fickle society of the Warsaw Government he expressed his convictions with pure and conscious pride; and thus, ever since 1788, he stood at the head of the Reform party, rose rapidly from step to step by his talents, knowledge, and activity, became member of the Council of public education, and soon afterwards, when scarcely 30 years old, Grand Marshal of Lithuania. He was no less successful in winning the hearts of the people; the great mass of the patriots followed their splendid leader with enthusiasm, and he, above all others, might regard himself as the real author of the constitution of 1791. "He is the only one of them" wrote the Russian Ambassador at this time to his Empress, "who possesses any talent, but he is wanting in genuine political wisdom, and his main faults—excessive confidence, self-love and self-dependence—are only too easily called into play. Thus he was like Kosciusko in the disinterestedness of his aims, and like Kollontai in his opinions, which inclined to democracy; but

while gloomy fears depressed the former, and hardened the latter, Potocky was full of indestructible hope and beaming confidence of victory. He had been already in this mood in 1792, and even the terrible disappointments of that year had not robbed him of his hopes. His friends were often unable to conceive how he could remain so cheerful in spite of all his toils and dangers: "If the worst comes to the worst," he would say, "we shall perish with our country; would that be a great misfortune?"

In spite of their differences of opinion, such a man might have lastingly co-operated with Kosciusko, to the great benefit of their common country. The case was different with Kollontai, from whose splendid natural gifts, and utter want of principle, the greatest injuries were to accrue to the patriotic cause.[1] He, too, like Potocky, had been educated in Rome for the priesthood, and had then attached himself to Bishop Soltyk, through whose favour he obtained a canonry in Cracow. Soon afterwards he went over to the Russian party, in the hope of further gain, and obtained thereby the rectorship of the University of Cracow. He soon recommended himself to the Rulers by his great abilities and his readiness to serve; he was made Referendarius of the Crown, and hoped to rise to the dignity of Chancellor and Bishop. He worked easily, knew better than almost any one the intricacies of the Polish law, wrote with an ever-ready pen, and with address, energy or passion, as his object or his patron might require. But unfortunately he partook not only of the love of pleasure, but of the corruption, so characteristic of the Polish nation. His red and swollen face, from which large fiery black eyes flashed forth, told of the excesses and debaucheries which had inflicted upon him violent gout in early life, so that he could not walk without a stick. Avarice was kindled in him by the love of pleasure; he was said to be ready to do anything for a

[1] Smitt, Suwarrow, II, 172, 476, 484.

suitable reward; never to perform the smallest service without heavy payment, and to like best of all to receive the chinking bribe from all the contending parties. When the patriots got the upper hand in 1790, he was equally ready to join it; and displayed, after the manner of converts, a fanatical and fiery zeal. His abilities were of eminent service to his party; he was well informed, a bold logician, who shrank from no conclusions if they did but serve his own interests; he was a thorough master of the technicalities of his work, and in the intrigues of factions quite invaluable. He took a prominent part in the legislation, and a still greater in the *coup d'état*, of 1791; and while Potocki raved about the ideal principles of the "Rights of Man," Kollontai was all for the material enjoyments of the revolution. When the catastrophe of 1792 overtook him, he began to waver once more; if his office of Vice Chancellor of the Crown had been guaranteed to him, he might easily even then have been induced to join the victorious party. He already went so far as to vote in the Royal Council for joining the Confederation; and when his late colleagues urged him to emigrate, he said, that it was all very well for them to talk; they would want for nothing wherever they were; but a poor devil like himself, who had nothing but his office to live on, was in a very different position; and he put it to them whether it would not be better that he should remain, join the Targovicians, and work in secret for the patriotic party. The others refused to listen to any such expedient, and he therefore resolved for the present to play a double game. He actually started from Warsaw, but secretly left behind him a written act of adhesion to the Targovician Confederation, and even informed the Russian ambassador of it. In the territory of Cracow, close to the frontiers of the land, he awaited the issue, but soon learned that the Russians despised him, that the Targovicians rejected his services with scorn, and that his Chancellorship had passed into other hands. He

therefore repaired to Dresden in the greatest fury, thirsting for revenge, and overflowing with the most deadly hatred. After the beginning of the Revolution he was with Kosciusko in Cracow when the news arrived of the revolt in Warsaw. He asked the messenger first of all whether the King had been killed; and on receiving a negative answer he broke out into loud curses. He was continually contesting the question with Kosciusko, whether it was better to crush the enemy with an iron hand, or to gain them over by generous forgiveness. He pointed out the utter baseness of the hostile faction, and demanded in the first place the wiping out of the great national stain—the serfdom of the peasants, well knowing that this measure would infinitely increase the mutual hatred of the two parties, and compel Kosciusko to make himself absolute by force of arms. The report of the measures advocated by Kollontai reached Warsaw before him, and caused the greatest excitement in the elements opposed to the Revolution. It was said that he intended to abolish all property, and to set on foot a general massacre according to the Parisian pattern.

The first measure which Potocki had to take in Warsaw, by order of the Commander-in-chief, was the appointment of a new Supreme Council which was to take the place of the Provisional Government. In addition to himself and Kollontai, the late President Zakrzewski and five other members were summoned; but the other members of the Provisorium were removed, and the Commandant of the city, Mokranowski, who was looked on as a tool of Stanislaus was superseded by the trustworthy General Orlowski. These arrangements excited opposition in several quarters. On the one side all the adherents of the King began to agitate, and these were joined, through fear of Kollontai's severity, by all the former friends of Russia, and the majority of the nobles, who saw in the dreaded abolition of serfdom the ruin of their prosperity. On the other side the proletaries and citizens of the capital were in a state of indignant

ferment, because the Council had been exclusively formed from the nobles, and complained that after the great victory of the popular cause, true representatives of the people, such as Kapustas and the Kilinski, had been excluded from the Government. The Russian party did not scruple to turn this popular feeling against Kosciusko, just as the friends of the Court in Paris had occasionally leagued themselves with Danton and his mobs against the Constitutional party. The citizens, egged on and supported by these unexpected allies, soon got up an extensive agitation, and sent a deputation to Kosciusko to demand a redress of their grievances. The General found himself in a painful position; it was humiliating to yield, and dangerous to refuse; he therefore tried a middle course, and appointed a number of the popular candidates, not indeed as members of the Council, but as Deputies. He thereby appeased for the moment the anger of the people: but the sting remained in their minds, and the antagonism of parties was only too soon to break out into open conflict.

Meanwhile Prussia completed her preparations for the struggle. In East Prussia General Brunéck with 8,000 men drew a cordon along the Lithuanian frontier, while General Schönfeldt on the Narew, with 11,000 men, had continual skirmishes with the Polish frontier guards. Farther to the south, on this side the Vistula, General Bonin, and subsequently the Crown Prince, commanded a corps of nearly 8,000 men between Zakrozyn and Rawa, to protect Posen against any raids which might be undertaken by the garrison of Warsaw. On the 3rd of June the King himself arrived at Favrat's head-quarters in the Cracow territory with considerable reinforcements. He was accompanied by Manstein and Lucchesini, as well as the Prince of Nassau-Siegen, whom Catharine had attached to the king as her military plenipotentiary, to consult with him respecting the plan of the campaign, and to sound the political intentions of Prussia. Nassau had always passed in St. Petersburg for a zealous advocate of the Prussian alliance; in the preceding

winter, he had gone beyond his instructions at Vienna in furthering Prussian interests, and was therefore a suitable mediator between the king and the Russian Empress, both of whom for the time concealed their game, each waiting till the other should make the first move. Nassau had already spoken to the Prussian ambassador in St. Petersburg about the annihilation of Poland; he said that he knew that the King desired a partition, and that Suboff and Markoff quite approved of it, and only wished to leave a narrow stripe of land between the two Empires, in order to avoid immediate neighbourhood and the little differences which always arose from it. At head-quarters he repeated these confidential communications. He declared that he was entirely without instructions and was only expressing his personal opinion, hinted how agreeable it would be to Suboff, and how flattering to himself, if Prussia would recommend them as the future Dukes of that border-land. He added that he had not the slightest doubt that in that case Suboff would use all his influence to promote the rounding-off of Prussia to the Vistula. All this sounded extremely well to the ear of the king, and the Russian plan of the campaign drawn up by Prince Repnin, which Nassau brought with him, agreed very well with this arrangement. The Russian armies were to confine themselves to the subjugation of Lithuania; and to leave the conquest of Poland to the west of the Vistula to the Prussian troops. The King heard indeed from other sources that Repnin for his own part, made no secret of his dislike to Prussia; and the Russian officers in general expressed a decided preference for Austria, and demanded her co-operation in the Polish quarrel. The letters of Count Goltz from St. Petersburg, too, were calculated to cool down the expectation raised by Nassau's promising representations. The Empress and Suboff treated him with great reserve; Markoff was in close communication with the Austrian Cobenzl, and Besborodko declared on all occasions that Russia during the present year must

favour the Emperor, as she had done the king of Prussia in 1793, and must always follow the principle of holding one German Power in check and under tutelage by means of the other.

In this uncertain state of affairs, the King's correct instinct inclined him first to beat the Poles, and then, after destroying Kosciusko, to continue his negotiations with the Powers. He was the more eager to expedite affairs, because he wished to pass only a few weeks in Poland, and then to follow the dictates of his heart by throwing himself into the French war—a determination which caused great terror among his Ministers, who expressed their eager wishes to the Marquis Lucchesini that he might be able to prevent, what they called, this unhappy journey to the Rhine. On the 5th of June a despatch arrived from Denisow that the Poles were marching against him and had driven in his outposts; the King immediately gave orders to his troops to march upon Szekozyn to the support of the Russians. Towards evening they reached the Russian position close to the Pilica, two leagues from the Poles, who singularly enough had not occupied the long marshy defile, but had extended themselves four or five miles behind it in a plain. These were Kosciusko and Grochowski with about 17,000 men,[1] of whom perhaps half were newly-raised bodies of peasants armed with scythes. The Prussians alone were as strong as the Poles, and the Russians numbered more than 8,000 men; the prospects of the Allies, therefore, were in every respect favourable. According to the orders of the King the Russians first, and then the Prussians, passed the defile on the morning of the 6th; the former then formed the left, and the latter the right, wing of the

[1] Treskow's figures, 26,000 seem, after what we have already stated, to be too high, Zajonczek's 15,000 are nearer to the truth; an exact estimate is impossible in consequence of the great fluctuation in the numbers of the general levy.

battle array,—the infantry being drawn up in two bodies, and the cavalry distributed on both wings or posted with the reserve. At the first advance of the Cossack *Pulks* the polish Cavalry dispersed with the same want of steadiness as at Raclawice and sought safety in flight; but this had no immediate effect on the issue of the battle, since the Russian infantry halted at a considerable distance from the enemy, and contented themselves with a rather ineffectual cannonade. The Prussian line advanced with impetuosity, drove the Poles from a few small villages, and prepared to enclose the enemy's left wing with overwhelming force. By this movement, however, in consequence of the slow advance of the Russians, their own left wing was exposed, and Kosciusko, seeing his advantage, made a violent attack upon it, the success of which would have divided the forces of the Allies at their centre. Some sharp fighting arose at this point, in which several Prussian battalions lost ground, until the Poles, being thrown into confusion by a report that Kosciusko had fallen, began to retreat. At this moment Russian and Prussian cavalry hastened to support their centre; whereupon Kosciusko withdrew his troops of the line behind the village of Rawka, and allowed the scythe men of his second line to receive the shock of the enemy's cavalry. In spite of their wretched arms these men stood like a wall to the cry of "Long live Father Thaddaeus," and though they suffered great loss repulsed the repeated charges of the cavalry. Meantime, however, the Russian infantry had at last come up; and at the same time the Prussian right succeeded in turning the Polish left, and Kosciusko already saw Prussian dragoons in the rear of his position. Under these circumstances he ordered a retreat, and then in spite of their previous heroic contempt of death, the undisciplined valour of his peasants was broken, and the whole Polish army left the field in disorderly flight. The Sangusko brigade alone defended a wood on their line of retreat for a time, and thereby saved the rest from complete annihilation.

But the position of the Poles was at this moment a desperate one: Kosciusko's hordes were utterly demoralized, and dispersed as soon as they caught sight of a division of the enemy. The greater part of the *levee en masse*, who had taken up arms against their will, now threw away their scythes and dispersed to their homes. Kosciusko saw himself for the moment utterly defenceless, and was unable any longer to bar the road to Cracow or Warsaw to the victors. Hard as it was, he resolved without hesitation to give up Cracow, and to preserve his communication with the capital, at any cost, by a retreat towards the north. Immediately after the battle the King of Prussia had sent General Elsner with about 2,000 men against Cracow, and had summoned General Ruits from Silesia to his support with five battalions and 1,300 cavalry. On the Polish side the city was looked upon as lost; several of Kosciusko's officers refused to take the command of so hopeless a defence, and Kosciusko at last named the young Winiawski as commandant—a zealous and devoted but inexperienced officer—with public orders to defend the weakly fortified town to the utmost with 800 men and 8 guns, but with secret instructions to surrender the place to the Austrians in the neighbourhood as soon as the Prussians should advance. When the column of General Elsner appeared before the place, Winiawski hastened to the Austrian Colonel; but the latter had not yet received instructions from the Belgian head-quarters and did not dare to act on his own responsibility. Cracow therefore capitulated on the 15th of June. The Poles retired to Galicia; an Austrian officer did indeed meet the Prussians as they entered the city with representations and protests, but General Elsner, who was prepared for such a case, treated him as a disguised Pole, and ordered him to leave the country. The old Sarmatian city was in the hands of the Prussians.

This was important enough as the first move in the game which now commenced between the three Powers, but it

had scarcely any effect upon the Polish war, the fate of which depended mainly on the person of Kosciusko and the possession of Warsaw. We may now assume as absolutely certain that a vigorous pursuit immediately after the battle of Rawka would have completed the destruction of the Polish army, and in a few weeks made the King of Prussia master of Warsaw, which was full of division and confusion. Only a few days before, the King had commenced operations with all the energy which might have led to these great results, and we are surprised after so successful a battle to observe a sudden and complete collapse. The army rested for three days near Rawka, and then marched slowly to the neighbouring town of Michalow, where it remained in complete inactivity till the 23rd of June—*i. e.* more than 14 days; so that Kosciusko had time to collect his troops, to inspire them with fresh courage, and to raise them to nearly their former numbers. We have no explanation of the reason of this extraordinary check; we only know that while the Prussian head-quarters made holiday with regard to military affairs, they were all the more agitated by political anxieties. For at this time intelligence arrived of the Emperor Francis' determination to leave his Belgian army; the agents of Prussia in Belgium and on the Rhine reported as a certain fact that the evacuation of the Netherlands had been ordered, and that a separate peace between Austria and France was on the point of being concluded. Leaving the last point out of consideration, it was easy to draw conclusions from the rest of the intelligence; there was no doubt that energetic action on the part of the Emperor both in Poland and St. Petersburg might be immediately looked for. On the part of Russia the symptoms of unfavourable feelings continued to increase. It was known that Igelström had despatched courier after courier, during the last few weeks, to inform the Empress that the Prussians would not enter Poland, but would come to an understanding with Kosciusko. General Fersen had just joined the army, and he too

showed not the slightest inclination to act with greater cordiality towards his Prussian brethren in arms. In addition to this, intelligence arrived that General Derfelden, on the east of the Vistula, had defeated a Polish corps under Zajonczek, on the 8th, near Chelm, and had subsequently occupied the whole of Lublin and driven the enemy beyond the Vistula. Derfelden himself was on the bank of this river, nearer to Warsaw than the king; the latter, therefore, expressed a wish that the Russian general should cooperate with him in his attack upon the capital. Reasonable as this proposal was under the circumstances, Derfelden immediately answered that, according to the plan of the campaign agreed upon, he had received peremptory orders from Prince Repnin to march to Lithuania without delay. There was nothing more to be said; but this conduct did not of course raise men's spirits at the Prussian headquarters, and the opinion was occasionally expressed that Prussia would do well to make no further exertions in this war, until Russia had guaranteed the due reward.[1]

All these circumstances may have conspired to cool down the previous zeal. At last, on the 23rd, the Prussians set themselves in motion towards Warsaw; but even now, in spite of Lucchesini's urgency, their march was extremely slow, although Kosciusko made no stand at any point, but quitted the field at the first fire of the van of the Allies, and retreated step by step on Warsaw. The position of affairs in this city grew worse every day, and the news of the battle of Rawka, more especially, had increased the party ferment to the highest pitch. The democratic faction raised the cry of treachery, and impetuously demanded a bloody revenge on the friends of Russia. The partisans of the King and the Noblesse added fuel to the fire, in order to embarrass the Supreme Council. The latter had forbid-

1 From Lucchesini's despatches to the Ministry. Treskow (102) should be corrected accordingly.

den all private clubs, but allowed assemblies of the people; and day after day violent scenes took place, in which young and fiery orators complained of the tediousness of the law, and excited the people to measures of revolutionary terrorism. The citizens slunk about restless and depressed, thinking that nothing could be better than the entrance of the Prussians, who would protect them from the violence of the mob and the vengeance of the Russians. The democratic leaders on the other hand openly declared, amidst roars of applause from their adherents, that as soon as the enemy appeared the people would massacre all the prisoners; and some inquired whether they should not commence with the foreign inhabitants of the city. When the Prussian army began to move again, the long-dreaded storm broke out in Warsaw. On the 29th of June an immense crowd assembled in front of the prison of the nobles belonging to the Russian party, and with wild cries demanded their immediate condemnation. The Court declared that this was impossible, as the proceedings were not yet concluded; whereupon the insurgents began to storm the building, cut down one of the gaolers, and dragged seven of the prisoners, and among them Bishop Messalski, Prince Czetwertinski and two Chamberlains of King Stanislaus to the place of execution. In vain did Potocki and Kollontai rush into the raging crowd, and endeavour by their eloquence to save them; they were pushed aside, and the seven were hung after cruel ill-treatment. The crowd then poured back again to the prison to fetch fresh victims; the clothes were already torn from the back of Count Moszinski, when the President Zakrzewski and General Orlowski forced their way through the crowd, and at the hazard of their lives rescued him from the hands of the raging multitude. But it was impossible to pacify them until the Court gave a formal promise to pass judgment on the rest of the traitors on the following day.

Kosciusko was greatly enraged by the intelligence of

these atrocities, and responded by an immediate order to punish the perpetrators in the severest manner. His name was so highly honoured, and the need of his ruling hand so universally felt, that his word was sufficient suddenly to change the excitement and rage of the mass of the people into sorrow and depression. The royalist party now began to bestir themselves more actively than ever, declared their entire agreement with the views of Kosciusko, and endeavoured to implicate no less persons than Potocki and Kollontai in the outrage. The secretary of the one, and the clerk of the other, had been at the head of the rioters; but in spite of all the efforts of their opponents, they were not to be induced to bring any charge against their masters. Under these unhappy circumstances, with the enemy at his heels, his countrymen divided by a deadly feud, and his nearest friends suspected and persecuted, Kosciuko arrived in Warsaw on the evening of the 9th of July, after his army had exchanged a lively cannonade during the whole of the day with the Prussians, and Zajonczek's corps had fought a bloody battle with the Russians. His long desired arrival produced a new outburst of warlike zeal, and inspired such new life into the National-guard, that 15,000 men took up arms to assist in the defence of the capital. As Kosciusko, after collecting his troops of all arms, had 17,000 men of the line, and 15,000 peasants in the capital, and the arsenal had furnished 450 guns for the arming of the ramparts and intrenchments, the material force of the Poles was considerably superior to that of the invaders, who numbered only 30,000 with scarcely 100 guns. The entrenchments, indeed, were far from being ready, and were completed in sight of the enemy. Even then professional soldiers placed little confidence in them, or in the military training of the National Guard and the Cracovians; but it is just in the defence of such miserable earthworks that the power of individual courage and national self-sacrifice has a thousand times prevailed over all the ad-

vantages of military art; and all depended on the degree in which the former qualities would be manifested by the Poles on this occasion. What was far more fatal to their cause than the want of regular training was their political discord, which, even after Kosciusko's appearance, demoralised the ranks of the combatants in the city and behind the trenches. Since the massacre in the prisons, and the retribution inflicted by Kosciusko, the latter virtually appeared as an ally of the royal party, and no greater misfortune than this could have been inflicted on Poland by the Warsaw murderers. For the so-called Royalists were exclusively, if not friends of Russia, at any rate opponents of what they called a hopeless insurrection, and every post or office which they obtained immediately sank into listless inactivity as far as the war was concerned. Moreover the democratic party was blind enough to engage in more and more bitter strife with the General, and thereby to drive him more and more into the arms of the opposite party. From the open manner in which the prison massacres had been carried on the ringleaders were soon discovered and convicted; and when five of them were executed, the Democrats complained that in the case of the traitors to the people, the court negligently entrenched itself behind the forms of law, but raged against the patriots with bloodthirsty haste. The agitation became so violent that Kosciusko gave way, and named the democratic Zajonczek President of the Revolutionary Tribunal. Now indeed the latter took up the prosecution against the friends of Russia with lively zeal, and soon passed sentence of death against the Bishop of Chelm, on the charge that he had voted for the ratification of the Partition treaty at the last Diet. Such an act of political vengeance caused the greatest excitement among the threatened party, and King Stanislaus said very truly, that according to this principle he might himself be brought to the gallows. Kosciusko, penetrated with a righteous horror of unjust bloodshed, commuted the sentence of death to im-

prisonment for life; yet hard as this sentence was for a political vote, Zajonczek immediately laid down his office as judge, and thus made the breach between himself and the Commander-in-chief a matter of publicity. The immediate consequence was a violent split among the officers in the army; the same men who fought together during the night against the advance of the Prussian works, contended against one another in the day time, with growing hatred, as destroyers of their country. The one party complained of the whole insurrection as a foolish, and therefore criminal, undertaking; the other loudly declared that all such sentiments ought to be choked in the blood of those who entertained them. Kosciusko stood alone between the two parties, obnoxious to the one as the author of the war, and to the other as the representative of clemency; but most fiercely attacked by the latter, and therefore driven against his will to seek the support of the Royalists. Hence it happened that he was compelled to fill the most unimportant offices with men of the Moderate party, adherents of the King or secret friends of the Russians. Jasinski had hitherto carried on the guerilla warfare of a bold partisan, had undertaken raids to Courland, Szamaiten, and Great Russia, sometimes victorious and sometimes suffering heavy losses, and had finally repulsed an attack of the Russians on Wilna with unflinching gallantry. But the enemy were now approaching with increased numbers—Generals Knorring and Sicianow from the North, the corps of General Numsen from the East, and Derfelden's division from the South; it was said in Warsaw that Jasinksi was not equal to the task, and that a tried warrior was wanted in Lithuania. Under the circumstances Kosciusko thought fit to appoint a member of the moderate party, General Wielhorski. No sooner had the latter arrived in Wilna than he declared the place hopelessly lost, gathered his troops together, and was about to retreat to Grodno, that is to the most westerly frontier of Lithuania. The zealous patriots were furious,

and Kosciusko was obliged to cancel the appointment, but he again sent an officer of the same party, General Mokranowski, and gave the latter's previous office in Warsaw to the nephew of the King, Prince Joseph Poniatowski, who soon afterwards allowed himself to be as thoroughly worsted by the Prussians as Wielhorski by the Russians. In short, in every quarter the cause of the Poles was condemned to impotence and ruin by their own internal dissensions.

While the interior of the city presented this aspect of strife and confusion, a precisely similar spectacle might be witnessed in the camp of the assailants outside its walls. The Allied army reached Warsaw on the 13th of July. The Russians formed the right or southern wing of the allied position; and the Prussians had marched in a wide circuit round the city in order to attack it from the north. The Polish fortifications on this side were in an extremely defective state, since an assault had been least of all expected in this quarter; and both the King of Prussia and General Favrat were of opinion that an immediate attack would deliver the city into their hands. But the Russian plenipotentiary, the Prince of Nassau, who arrived just as the King was about to give orders for the attack, succeeded during a private conference in changing the King's views; and the troops encamped and remained a fortnight more in utter inactivity. There was a complete cessation of arms at this period, and at the same time the relation between the King and the Russian General Fersen, which had never been very friendly, became decidedly hostile. Their disagreement arose naturally from the general position in which the two Powers stood to one another. Enough was known of the resources of the insurgents, of the desire of the Polish nobility for peace, of the apathy of the peasants in Cracow Sendomir, Szamaiten and Courland, to prevent any man at the head-quarters of the Allies from anticipating serious danger in the war. They felt themselves strong enough to crush the insurrection at any moment, and the question

when this proper moment should have arrived immediately became dependent, not upon military exigencies, but political expediency. On the Russian side they had no wish to see the King of Prussia hurrying on from triumph to triumph. The Government at St. Petersburg had as yet received no direct intelligence from Belgium; but they knew beforehand what claims would be made from that quarter, and what differences with Prussia would result from them. Rather, therefore, than give the latter the advantage of a speedy overthrow of Warsaw, they granted the Poles a brief continuance of their government, until Russian forces were at hand to decide, first the war, and then the diplomatic question—the Partition of the country. These forces were at that time on the march from all quarters. We have seen how many divisions surrounded Lithuania; and equally considerable armies were already moving up towards Poland itself. On the 26th of June the Reis Effendi in Constantinople gave the final assurance to the Russian Ambassador that the Porte had no other wish than to be at peace with Russia, and after the representations of the Russian government he consented to give up the claims of Turkey with respect to the tarif of duties. This arrangement set all the Russian forces at liberty which had hitherto been employed in protecting the southern frontier against the Osmans; and the best of the Russian generals, Suworow, received orders to collect an army from these forces in Podolia for the Polish war. It was evidently in the interest of Russia that before the appearance of these troops the Prussians should not succeed in striking any important blow, and least of all one of such mighty consequences as the capture of Warsaw.

This position of affairs soon made itself felt at Prussian head-quarters. General Fersen, became every day, as the King expressed it, less tractable. At the same time information arrived from Vienna respecting the resolutions of the Emperor Francis. It became known that Austria de-

manded the four Southern Palatinates, and was not willing to leave either Cracow or Sendomir in Prussian hands. The Imperial general Harnoncourt had already entered Lublin with 5,000 men, and pushed forward some of his posts into the Province of Sendomir, which was already occupied by Prussia. Nothwithstanding the indignation which this step caused at the Prussian head-quarters, General Fersen coolly expressed his opinion that the wishes of Austria were entirely justified. Hereupon a radical difference of opinion manifested itself among those who were about the person of the King, respecting the future conduct of the war. Lucchesini adhered with increased zeal to his view that the greater the hostility the Allies displayed towards Prussia, the more energetically ought she to proceed in her operations against the enemy. He proposed that the Prussians troops should assault and take Warsaw as soon as possible, and not contented with this position, cross the Vistula, and spread themselves far and wide over Lithuania, so that it should at last appear an act of self-sacrificing moderation, if Prussia contented herself with the line of the Vistula—with Warsaw and Cracow. Such a course of proud and resolute courage would no doubt, in the difficult and irritating position of affairs, have been the wisest and most prudent; but, alas!—there were other spirits who were once for all convinced that the path of wisdom is a crooked one. Lucchesini's brother in law, General Bischoffswerder, the author of the Austrian alliance, who in 1790 had nipped the bold aggressive policy of Prussia, once more exercised a fatal influence on the resolutions of the King. The unfriendly feeling of the Russians, he allowed, was unmistakeable; they abstained from all exertions and all successes; they wished that Prussia should bleed to death in useless battles before the Polish walls. But the King, he said, ought not to gratify them, or to risk his brave soldiers against the horrible insurgents. If they were to storm Warsaw they would only ruin a future Prussian city, and

burden themselves with the necessity of inflicting a fearful punishment on its inhabitants to still the Russian thirst of vengeance. On the other hand, he declared that Warsaw would doubtless capitulate as soon as extensive and imposing preparations were made for a regular siege. While the heavy ordnance necessary for this purpose was being brought up from Graudenz and Breslau, the Russians might be induced to make by themselves attacks which would weaken their forces, while the Prussians were spared for the final decision. The General succeeded, principally by the description of the bloody horrors of a conquest by storm, in gaining over the easily moved heart of the King. It was resolved, in accordance with Bischoffswerder's views, to protract the siege, and for the present to allow the Russians to try their luck against the Polish entrenchments.

But General Fersen was far two well informed of the general position of affairs to allow such a plan to succeed with him. When the Prussians, on the 26th of July, moved their camp to the village of Wola, somewhat nearer to Warsaw, in order to open their trenches against the city at that point, and the King called upon the Russians to storm the city on their side, Fersen plainly answered that with his weak battalions he could not take so hazardous a step, but that he was ready to act in concert with the royal troops. The Prussians thereupon began to throw up their earthworks, and gradually completed some batteries; but the engineers had chosen their ground so badly that scarcely a ball reached the town, and the Poles soon afterwards found space, on their side, to settle themselves in new trenches in the left flank of the Prussian approaches, and to sweep the latter with an extremely harassing fire. As the Prussians still remained inactive, General Fersen sent word, on the 3rd of August, that he had received orders to cross the Vistula and join Repnin in Lithuania, in case the inactivity before Warsaw continued, and he was still kept in the dark respecting the plans of the Prussian Council of

war; he added, that as Russia was in this war not merely an auxiliary, but the leading Power, he must demand joint deliberations on every measure. These pretensions displeased the King extremely, but he thought that Fersen's departure would produce an unfavourable impression in St. Petersburg, and therefore condescended to send Fersen a sketch of a common plan for taking Warsaw by storm. But the Russian general immediately answered by saying that his meaning had been completely misunderstood; that he had only meant to protest against his own dependence on the Prussian General, but had never thought of preferring a premature attack by storm to a regular siege. Upon this the party who were for waiting regained their influence over the King, in spite of all that Lucchesini could urge about the evident ill-will of the Russians, and the necessity of rapid and independent action. Catharine, it was said, made no sign; while Prussia was staking her best blood, the two Imperial Courts would appropriate all the booty to themselves without having fired a shot; not a step, therefore, must be taken by the Prussians until they were assured of a suitable reward; and meanwhile they ought to urge on the Russians and Austrians to render active assistance in the siege. Accordingly despatches were sent off to Repnin and Harnoncourt to ask for support, and in expectation of the answer all military operations were once more at a stand-still.

Cares of another kind existed, calculated to spur a vigorous nature to redoubled activity, but to increase the burden of irresolution in a weak and broken mind like that of the King. In the rear of the army troops of rioters collected in South Prussia, in the Province acquired in the last Partition. Here and there bands of 80 to 100 men showed themselves, plundered the public money chests, dispersed small divisions of soldiers, and disappeared into the woods when larger bodies of men were sent against them. On the 22nd of August they even succeeded in surprising a large transport

of powder—which was proceeding up the Vistula from Graudenz for the siege of Warsaw—and throwing it into the water. Nothing would have curbed them so effectually as the capture of Warsaw; but Bischoffswerder and his associates only derived additional arguments from these occurrences for concentrating their forces and saving them for future dangers. In the middle of July intelligence arrived from St. Petersburg that the official declaration of Austria had been received. It was indicative of Catharine's mood, that while all the previous reminders of Prussia had remained entirely unanswered, the diplomatic stand-still now suddenly came to an end. On the 10th of August, Alopeus, the Russian ambassador in Berlin, proposed that the final negotiation respecting the fate of Poland should take place in St. Petersburg with the co-operation of Austria. The King on his part had already resolved to send Count Tauenzien, who had proved his skill in negotiation the year before in Coburg's head-quarters, to Russia, with instructions above all things to defend the interests of Prussia against the Austrian claims. The nearer the crisis approached—the more evident it became that it would be determined by the measures of Austria—the more intensely were the regards of all the parties interested directed once more towards the French war. This was the time, as we may remember, when the evacuation of Belgium by the Austrians took place. The Prussian government wavered between the fear that the Emperor would set all his forces free for the war in Poland by a separate peace with France, and the fear that by increased exertions against the French he might obtain the entire goodwill of England and Russia, and thereby reduce Prussia to a cipher. It was doubly painful, therefore, that just at this moment the relations of Prussia to the Maritime Powers were in an extremely involved and unsatisfactory state, and that the ambiguity of the treaty of the Hague became conspicuously apparent.

We must now take a glance at the position and the operations of the Prussian Army of the Rhine.

At the Hague, as we have seen, Malmesbury had demanded that these Prussian troops should be employed in Belgium. Haugwitz had expressed his personal agreement with the English Lord, but had declined to give an official promise, and referred all military matters to a subsequent settlement by the Generals. For the promotion of the first armament England was to pay £300,000 immediately after the ratification of the treaty, and four weeks after the payment of this sum—*i. e.* about the 24th of May—the army was to be ready for the field. The execution of the treaty suffered at the very commencement a delay pregnant with consequences, from the circumstance that the English government did not send off the subsidy from London until the 25th of May, that it did not arrive in Hamburg until the middle of June, nor reach Berlin before the beginning of July, so that England could not insist upon the Prussian army being ready for the field before the beginning of August. Lord Malmesbury, who had likewise been unnecessarily detained in England for several weeks, arrived in Maestricht on the 1st of June, to hold a last conference in that place with Haugwitz. Haugwitz immediately hinted a wish that Möllendorf should remain with his army on the Rhine. When Malmesbury thereupon declared that it was the decided intention of England to employ the troops in Belgium, Haugwitz repeated his assurances of his own personal readiness to comply with Malmesbury's wishes,[1] but at the same time reminded him that in the absence of the money nothing could be done for four weeks. Mean-

[1] This was Haugwitz's only fault, that he (evidently from dislike of trouble) left it to Möllendorf to settle the question of the theatre of war, and avoided a quarrel with Malmesbury. His conduct can hardly be called double-dealing, as he from the very beginning declared that the matter must be decided by a *concert militaire*.

while Lord Cornwallis, undoubtedly the best of the English generals, came to Maestricht; and at the same time Baron Kinckel arrived from Holland to take part in the Prussian negotiations. To Malmesbury's great vexation Kinckel brought a memorial from the Prince of Orange in which Möllendorf's continued presence on the Rhine was represented to be the only course consistent with the interests of Holland, and it required all the imperious vehemence of Malmesbury to bring the Dutch back again to their subservience to the views of England. The difficulties were, however, not yet at an end. Coburg and Orange, considering the matter from a military point of view, agreed in thinking that the Prussian army was indispensable for the defence of the Rhine; and even Thugut loudly protested against the English plan, because he expected from the presence of a strong Prussian force in Belgium greater hinderance to his political operations in that country, than military aid in the prosecution of the war.[1] Malmesbury, who was all the more touchy on this point because he had once supported the views of Möllendorf, determined to go in person with Kinckel and Cornwallis to the Prussian head-quarters in order, by the immediate influence of his presence, to set Möllendorf and his army in motion towards Belgium. He arrived in Kirchheim-Bolanden on the 20th of June, but the first thing he heard was that no such movement could be made before the arrival of the English money. For the army, although in excellent condition as regarded the men, had no magazine, no stores of ammunition, no materials for making bridges, no baggage horses; nor had it received any fresh men since the beginning of the Polish war, and numbered not much more than 40,000 men under its colours—facts, however, which were carefully concealed from the English envoys. Möllendorf further declared in the most

[1] Lord Granville's correspondence with Sir Morton Eden and Lord Yarmouth, May 1794.

decided manner that his troops were absolutely indispensable on the Middle Rhine. He had driven the French in May out of the valley of the Rhine, taken up a position in the Vosges mountains, and mantained himself there up to that time in connection with the Army of the Empire under the Prince of Sachsen-Teschen. It appeared quite clear to him that after his departure the Army of the Empire would not be able to sustain the onset of the French for a single week. When this army had once been beaten and driven across the Rhine, there would be nothing to prevent the French from renewing the calamities of 1792 on a greater scale—taking Mayence, Coblence and Treves, and thereby cutting off the Allied armies in Belgium from Germany.[1] On the other hand he offered, as soon as he had touched the English money, to pass through the Vosges, and make an attack on the Saare and Upper Moselle, and thus turn the tables and attack the French armies in Belgium in the rear—*i. e.* carry out the plan which Coburg and Brunswick had agreed upon in the summer of 1793, when they were thwarted by the objections of Thugut and Wurmser. Coburg and Orange, as we know, would have been contented with this, and even Lord

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[1] Vivenot, who always agrees with Malmesbury (the latter is as bitter against Prussia as the Austrian Captain) pays no regard to this consideration, which decides the matter. He entirely forgets in this place that in other parts of his book—where he praises Austria at the expense of the other Estates of the Empire—he describes more minutely than any other Author the worthlessness of the Army of the Empire, of which only 36,000 out of the 79,000 were fit for service (Vivenot I, 97). How could these have held the Rhine frontier without the Prussians? In p. 97 indeed he says that Sachsen-Teschen had agreed to the departure of the Prussians, but forgets that the Prince did so on condition that 25,000—nearly half the army—should remain on the Rhine. He also seems to overlook the fact that the Emperor Francis himself in a letter to Coburg, on the 15th of July, calls the English plan utterly impracticable.

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Cornwallis acknowledged the weight of the military considerations in favour of the plan. But Malmesbury with haughty impetuosity declared that according to the Hague treaty the Maritime Powers alone had the right to dispose of the Prussian army, and that they intended to sent it to Belgium, and that he would allow no further debate on that point. The discussion then assumed a very bitter tone. Möllendorf appealed to Haugwitz, who had repeatedly told him that the choice of the theatre of war was to be left to the Generals; Malmesbury replied that this was impossible, as Haugwitz had always known and approved of the intentions of England. In a state of great irritation he called on the Count by letter to bring the obstinate or corrupted general to reason. But Haugwitz in his reply of the 28th reminded Malmesbury that he had himself hindered the march of the army from Mayence—that no agreement had been come to in the treaty respecting the theatre of war, which was to be left to the decision of the Generals—and, lastly, that the primary source of all the difficulties was the non-arrival of the money. Malmesbury saw that he could not carry his point, and returned to Frankfort with rage in his heart, and sent off despatches to his Government in which the perfidy of the Prussians was pourtrayed in the most glaring colours.

Meanwhile the events of the war turned out as unfavourably as possible to his views and wishes. The battle of Fleurus was fought in Belgium, and the Austrian Army was in full retreat. Numerous reports were spread that a peace between France and the Emperor had already been concluded, and even the most cautious announced that Coburg would not halt until he reached the Rhine. The Prussian Ministers had after all been pricked by their consciences during the late negotiation respecting the English claims; but now they saw their precautions completely justified, and thought themselves extremely fortunate that Möllendorf had resisted the demands of Malmesbury. They

therefore adhered to their previous resolution, although Thugut now completely changed sides, and after having succeeded in withdrawing the Austrians from Belgium to the Rhine, strongly urged the English Ministry to insist on the departure of the Prussian troops from the Rhine to Belgium. All these negotiations produced no other fruits for the Coalition than an increase of ill feeling on all sides; while the French were busily making the best use of the time thus gained. In the latter part of June, the French army of the Rhine had received its reinforcements from La Vendée, and from the beginning of July they began to attack the Prussian position in the Hardt mountains with ever increasing numbers and impetuosity. From the 2nd to the 13th of July there was scarcely a day's repose; bloody engagements were fought round almost every mountain top in the neighbourhood of Kaiserslautern; at last numbers prevailed, and Möllendorf was obliged to retreat and seek protection under the guns of Mayence with a loss of 2,000 men and 16 guns. Sachsen-Teschen thereupon withdrew to Mannheim, and entirely abandoned the left bank of the Rhine. Möllendorf's declaration that after the withdrawal of his troops the French would become complete masters of the middle Rhine had received a painful confirmation.

Soon afterwards Prince Reuss was sent by Coburg to the head-quarters of the Army of the Empire at Schwetzingen, in order to consult with Möllendorf and Sachsen-Teschen respecting future operations. Coburg held the same opinion as before, that the Prussian army belonged to the middle Rhine; he only wished that it should push forward its main body from Mayence towards the Hundsrück, in order that the French Moselle army might not extend itself in the territory of Treves from the Saare, and so threaten Coburg's flank and rear. If this were done it would be necessary for Sachsen-Teschen to follow the movements of the Prussians, and to send one of his divisions to the North from Mannheim to Mayence. The two Generals

immediately acquiesced in this proposal, and, on the 26th, drew up a new plan for the position of the army in accordance with it. Sachsen-Teschen was to send 18,000 to Mayence, Möllendorf to keep 12,000 there, and the Prince of Hohenlohe to take the command of these 30,000 men. Möllendorf was to employ the other Prussian troops to occupy the Hundsrück, to cover Coblence and, if possible, Treves, and to send off General Kalkreuth immediately to the Moselle to defend the latter town. Möllendorf, who like his Government was heartily sick of the French war and the Austrian alliance, signed this agreement, indeed, but added that he took for granted the defence of the countries on the left bank of the Rhine by Coburg, and that if this expectation were not fulfilled he should not consider himself bound. Malmesbury likewise gave his consent, but declared that the whole scheme had nothing to do with the Hague treaty, and would not be acknowledged by him as a fulfilment of it. [1]

But, alas! this project too was destined to remain fruitless for the grand object of the war. Kalkreuth, it is true, set out for Treves, but the French got the start of him, and drove the Austrian General Blankenstein out of the town in spite of a gallant resistance. [2] The last remains of the good understanding between the Allies were then lost in a barren dispute as to whether Kalkreuth had advanced too slowly, or Blankenstein had retreated too quickly. [3] Möllen-

[1] The English Ministry thought differently, and recognised the plan as the best conceivable employment of the Prussian troops. — [2] When Malmesbury received the news "*Trèves est pris*," he still retained composure enough for the witticism "*Eh bien, désormais nous n'aurons ni repos ni trève.* — [3] This is not the place to discuss their mutual accusations. But it is sufficiently naive of Vivenot to print the Austrian accounts, and to fancy that he has thereby proved that the Austrians were entirely in the right, and the Prussians entirely in the wrong. My course—that of leaving the matter undetermined—appears to him one-sided, and his own, which gives judgment on the evidence of one party only, impartial history!

dorf, embittered by this quarrel, and still further irritated by the non-appearance of the 18,000 Austrians in Mayence, remained motionless in his position, so that Malmesbury reported to London with more decision than ever, that it was now beyond all doubt that Prussia was inactive from ill-will, and that England was being cheated out of her subsidies. During the same period Möllendorf wrote to Lucchesini that his position between the English and Austrian pretensions was absolutely untenable. He said that Austria had no other object in view than peace with France and aggrandisement in Poland, and that in his opinion Prussia could do no better than follow the same course, of making peace with the French in order to be able to use her whole power in Poland. It was not the first time that he had meddled with politics. Although 70 years old he was still a man of clear and restless mind, a friend not of action but of bustle, cunning and ambitious, with an inborn inclination for intrigue; so that he must have been not a little amused when Malmesbury described him as a straightforward but obtuse man, who allowed himself to be led by subordinate confidants. He had already on many occasions exercised an influence on the negotiations in 1793, and had just helped to bring about a radical change in the administration of South Prussia.[1] He wrote to the King from the Palatinate, on the 5th of July, when the first reports of Montgaillard's negotiation spread through the world, and begged for credentials to enable him to treat in a similar manner with

[1] As general in command he had introduced the Prussian officials into that country in 1793, had made himself acquainted with the local circumstances, and promised the inhabitants to respect their peculiar institutions. The Minister Voss, who subsequently undertook the government of the province had no notions of that kind, but placed everything at once on a Brandenburg footing, to the great discontent of the Poles; so that Möllendorf now got him removed and superseded by the Silesian Minister Count Hoym.

Robespierre's agents. Lucchesini was obliged at that time to reprove him and to inform him that those rumours were incredible, and that no overtures could on any account be made by Prussia to France. But he was not, as we have just seen, to be so easily deterred, and repeated his proposal a few weeks afterwards. In the meantime the progress of the Prussian arms in Poland had been interrupted, and the hostile attitude of Austria in St. Petersburg become known, so that Möllendorf now found energetic support. Of the Ministers, Finkenstein, Alvensleben and Geusau, had long been convinced of the necessity of peace with France, and the war with Poland confirmed them in this opinion more and more every day, since they saw no possibility of maintaining two great armies, and well knew that stronger forces must be sent into Poland. They no more believed than the King himself in the sudden conclusion of a separate peace between France and Austria; but it was only too certain that the Imperial army was endeavouring to get out of Belgium, and to take up a position on the Rhine. In this movement the Court of Berlin thought they saw a menace against Bavaria [1], and the Prussian principalities of Anspach and Baireuth; so that Möllendorf was kept on the Rhine that he might protect Baireuth in case of need, and exercise a pressure on Bohemia. At the head-quarters before Warsaw Lucchesini highly approved of these views, and took the first opportunity to test the personal feelings of the King with respect to these great questions.

The English government, which shortly before, in July, had strengthened itself by the admission of the Conservative whigs (Portland, Pelham, Windham, friends of Burke) into

[1] The political journal, a paper entirely under Austrian influence reported circumstantially at that time from Vienna, that Russia had invited the Emperor to occupy Bavaria for himself. The Prussian and Bavarian ambassadors received no notice of it.

the Ministry, was more than ever resolved to carry on the contest with revolutionary France to the very last. They therefore checked Malmesbury's zeal, and told him that they would act with Prussia as long as even a negative advantage could be gained from the payment of the subsidies. After the month of June they took nearly the same view of Austria's attitude as Prussia herself, and did not fail to see that England alone was interested for Belgium, while Thugut only thought of acquisitions in Germany or Poland. While, therefore, the Prussian Statesmen were inclining to peace with France, the English Ministry resolved to make fresh exertions to keep Austria in the European Coalition. When the government at Vienna heard in the beginning of July that these sentiments prevailed in the English cabinet, the effect produced was instantaneous. Austria entertained a lively desire of English subsidies; and with the view of obtaining them the Emperor determined to send Count Mercy to London, and meantime wrote to Coburg on the 15th of July, directing him to maintain his position on the Meuse as long as possible, and to give the lie to all reports of the voluntary evacuation of Belgium by the Austrians. Nay, Coburg was even called upon to resume the offensive, though nothing, indeed, was said about the reinforcements which he so urgently called for. On the contrary, a fresh letter from the Emperor arrived on the 31st of July in which no further mention was made of offensive movements, but only of defending the line of the Meuse; and even this was expressly made dependent on the success of Count Mercy's mission in London. Meanwhile England on her part sent off Earl Spencer, Lord Privy Seal, and Thomas Grenville, brother of the Foreign Minister, to Vienna, to urge the Austrians as strongly as possible to renew the offensive in Belgium. The intelligence of this embassy naturally produced the greatest excitement at the Prussian head-quarters. It was thought that it would bring the wavering counsels of the

Austrian Government to a final decision. The King was of opinion that Austria would allow herself to be carried away by the influence of England, and feared that the latter would then withdraw her subsidies from Prussia, and transfer them to Austria alone. Lucchesini considered it certain that Thugut would refuse, in which case he thought the time would have arrived to come forward with a proposal for a general peace. He therefore proposed to the King that the latter should send him, under some pretext or other, to Vienna for a few days, and after laying Möllendorf's letter before the King, he suggested a comprehensive deliberation on the question of peace with France.

The first effect of this attempt was a violent outbreak on the part of the King.[1] "No one," he cried, "shall drive me to take so dishonourable a step—to a negotiation with regicides. How could I look the Maritime Powers in the face, who are paying me subsidies! how I should be branded as a traitor to the Empire by Austria, who denies all separate negotiations!" Lucchesini immediately drew back, and explained that he only contemplated an appeal to the Allied Powers, and the commencement of a general negotiation with a view to peace. "Certainly," said the King, "it would be a fortunate thing if we had peace, but how can we obtain it honourably before the Jacobins have felt the weight of our sword? Let others try it, if they do not know how to wage war, but no servant of mine shall seduce me to take the first step." Lucchesini well understood his master, and knew that every hasty outbreak of this kind only exhausted his inward power of resistance. He adhered to his opinion, and hinted that however averse they might be to peace, there was no need to display openly their desire of war; and that it would at

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1 Lucchesini to Möllendorf Aug. 14th; and to the Ministers Aug. 1st, Aug. 8th, Aug. 14th.

any rate be useful to inform Earl Spencer that Prussia would not renew the subsidy-treaty for 1795. Even this the King forbade most positively, for how, he said, could he carry on the campaign on the Rhine without money! The only thing which he could be persuaded to do was to empower Hardenberg, at that time Minister of Anspach and Baireuth, to treat with Malmesbury, and thus to save Möllendorf from further English pressure. Lucchesini was to go to Vienna, but he was only to listen and observe, and not to breathe a syllable about peace. The Marquis protested, of course, that he was only the obedient tool of his sovereign, but he could not help expressing his pity for the numerous States who would have joyfully united with powerful Prussia in any effort for peace—*e. g.* the majority of the German Estates, Spain—from jealousy of England,—and Naples, whose ambassador in Vienna, Marquis Gallo, had dinned into his ears for months, that nothing but peace could save Italy and Europe. "Good God!" cried the King, "I know very well that peace is a blessing of Heaven; I have no objection if you personally, you—the Marquis Lucchesini—in your wisdom, can bring the others to your views; but I repeat my positive orders that my name be not mentioned in any way, and that not the slightest reference be made to my Government."

"I have run greater risks to day," wrote Lucchesini to Möllendorf, after this conversation, "than a hundred zealous patriots would have done; and I have done great things; I have permission to sow the first seeds of peace, and will stake my whole existence on the performance of this work of salvation."

Animated by these sentiments he started for Vienna on the 14th of August, and on the 24th had his first audience with the Emperor Francis; on the following day he was obliged, by the express order of the King, to exhort the Minister Thugut to supply troops for the siege of Warsaw. Meanwhile the fire of those advanced posts on the left wing,

referred to above, had become intolerable to the Prussian trenches, and the King gave orders on the 26th to drive the troublesome Poles from their position. The troops performed the task with the greatest gallantry, and the King, fired by their joyful alacrity, resolved, after a sally of the Poles on the 28th had been brilliantly repulsed, to fix the general assault for the 1st of September. But just at this moment a despatch arrived from Lucchesini, announcing that Austria declared herself unable to send troops to Warsaw; and the Marquis justly remarked that it was fortunate for Prussia that the Emperor did not take this opportunity of strengthening his influence in Poland. At the same time a letter arrived from Count Goltz in St. Petersburg, according to which Catharine had approved of all the difficulties raised by General Fersen, and expressed a wish that he should altogether separate himself from the Prussian army and cross over to the right bank of the Vistula. She had, indeed, added that this separation was not to take place if the King of Prussia positively forbade it; but it could no longer be doubted what was the state of feeling in St. Petersburg, and how little dependence was to be placed on the active support of Russia. If Fersen really retired to Lithuania, as was now to be expected, the position of the 25,000 Prussians before Warsaw, considering the numbers of the enemy, might appear a critical one; though, of course, the wretched quality of the Polish troops greatly diminished the danger. They might on this occasion have remembered the example of Frederick the Great, who was also placed in a hazardous position when the same Catharine recalled her auxiliary troops from his army, and employed the last days of their presence in his camp in storming the entrenchments of the enemy. But his successor was not one of those commanding spirits who gather fresh vigour from every fresh danger; he was courageous and fond of war, but he had none of that firmness of mind which is the very soul of command. The difficulties of a great task did not

inspire him, but threw him into a state of weary vexation, in which all strength of will and clearness of ideas were lost. Lucchesini was no longer beside him; his other counsellors described the danger he ran of being buried in the waves of insurrection—the unfairness of carrying on the contest with Prussian blood alone—and the necessity of making the two Imperial courts feel the value of Prussian aid by withdrawing it for a while. And thus the attack ordered for the 1st of September was not carried out, and immediately afterwards the fatal resolution was taken to raise the siege and lead the troops to South Prussia, in order to secure their position according to the rules of military prudence before attempting a fresh attack. The revolt in South Prussia afforded an official pretext for the retreat; and the loss of the powder transport was more particularly lamented, and declared to render a further bombardment of Warsaw impossible.[1] They found powder enough however to mask their retirement; the batteries fired for two days without cessation; on the evening of the 5th of September the guns were withdrawn from the trenches; and on the morning of the 6th the regiments followed them, dispirited and angry, but not more so than the King himself, who handed over the comand to general Schwerin, and hastened back to Berlin out of health and out of temper.

[1] The Imperial Courts were not deceived, but most writers have been so. The loss of the powder figures in all histories to the glory of Mniewski and Niemejowski, who made this decisive capture. The dates alone might have prevented this mistake. It took place on the 22nd August at midday (Treskow 172) and the news of it must have reached head-quarters long before September 1st.

CHAPTER III.

TAKING OF WARSAW.

THUGUT RECOMMENDS FOR THE PRESENT THE DEFENCE OF THE LINE OF THE MEUSE. THE NEGOTIATION WITH SPENCER AND GRENVILLE HAS NO RESULT. —THE DUKE OF YORK MARCHES BACK FROM NORTH BRABANT OVER THE RHINE.—GENERAL MÖLLENDORF ENTERS INTO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.—ENGLAND ANNOUNCES TO PRUSSIA HER INTENTION OF WITHDRAWING FROM THE TREATY OF THE HAGUE.—THE POLES ARE OBLIGED TO EVACUATE LITHUANIA.—DOMBROWSKI BREAKS INTO SOUTH PRUSSIA.— GENERAL SUWOROW.—HE DEFEATS SIERAKOWSKI AT KRUPZYCE.—HE GAINS ANOTHER VICTORY AT BRZESC.—KOSCIUSKO ATTACKS GENERAL FERSEN.—BATTLE OF MACIEJOWICE.—WANT OF COUNSEL IN WARSAW.—SUWOROW DEFEATS GENERAL MAYEN AT KOBILKA.—STORMING OF PRAGA.— CAPITULATION OF WARSAW.

SCARCELY had the news spread through Germany that the Prussian army had ingloriously retreated before the Polish insurrection, than men's minds were far more deeply agitated by the report of a fresh disaster in the west.

Austria continued her retreat from Belgium, which had been interrupted in July, and the Rhenish provinces of Germany saw themselves threatened in their whole extent by a hostile inundation.

The Emperor of Austria, as we have seen, in expectation of English subsidies, had written to the Prince of Coburg on the 31st of July, and directed him for the present [1] to hold the line of the Meuse, in so far as it was not already in the hands of the French, with all his power. He accordingly posted his right wing near Venloo, and his centre in and

[1] Autograph letter of the Emperor, 31st of July; Witzleben III, 336, 358.

about Maestricht. In the South, after Liege had been taken by the French, Coburg's left wing retired behind the Ourthe, which runs into the Meuse at that city, and occupied the line from Liege to Malscheid. After the arrival of some reinforcements, the Imperial army had an effective force of 83,000 men,[1] but had, as we know, returned exhausted and demoralised from the Belgian battle fields, and absolutely needed a long period of rest and refreshment before it could be expected to enter into any new contests. Its allies in the army of the Duke of York were not in much better case. These amounted to about 43,000 men—English, Dutch and German mercenaries,—exclusive of the garrisons of the fortresses, who, after the evacuation of Antwerp, had taken up a position in North Brabant between the great fortresses of Herzogenbusch and Bergen-op-Zoom, on the so-called Dongerheath, some miles to the South of the Meuse. A vigorous pursuit on the part of the enemy in large masses, at the end of July, would have produced the most important results, and driven the English to their ships, and the Austrians to the other side of the Rhine. They were saved from this danger by the order of the Committee of Public Safety, that, before anything else was done, the four French fortresses which had been taken by Coburg, and the maritime strongholds which still resisted, should be captured. The French generals were compelled to employ more than 40,000 men in these sieges, and as the other Belgian provinces—which were pitilessly plundered, and infuriated by numberless outrages—required strong garrisons, the number of French troops disposable in the field was diminished in a very serious manner. While their generals, up to this time, had always been able to appear in every part of the theatre of war with greatly superior forces, Pichegru could now only send 45,000 against York, and Jourdan not more than

[1] Austrian Military Journal 1820, Sec. 2 and 3. Witzleben III, 365.

53,000 men against Coburg. Far from undertaking any serious pursuit, therefore, they were both well satisfied to be left undisturbed by the enemy; and thus it happened that during the continuance of this war of fortresses, a truce of more than a month was observed by the armies; in which the Allies possessed every means of recruiting themselves from the toils and sufferings of the Sambre battles.

But in spite of this prospect the leader of the Allied armies, the Prince of Coburg, was by no means minded to risk his reputation once more by a continuance of this unhappy war. He had remained firm in March, when the Emperor remained deaf to all entreaties for reinforcements and for alliance with Prussia; he had held out in May, when the hand of diplomacy crippled all warlike operations, and roused the suspicion of treachery in the minds of all the Allies; he had borne it, in June, when, instead of the laurels he had longed for, the sad task was imposed on him of leading the army out of Belgium with as little loss as possible. But now, when the prospect of success was infinitely lessened, when the troops were decimated, and the resources of Belgium abandoned to the enemy;—now, the Imperial letters of the 15th and 31st of July suddenly appeared, filled with blame and complaints at these losses, with a denial of any systematic plan of retreat, and repeated orders to resume the offensive! And when Coburg complained of the insufficiency of his means, the Emperor, instead of sending any adequate reinforcement, ordered Blankenstein to join him with the troops saved from Treves —in all about 3 battalions! The bitterness which filled the heart of the grey-haired commander at these unreasonable demands upon him were increased by every day's experience. The generals under him complained of the relaxation of all order and discipline in the army, which was chiefly caused by the terrible deficiency in the supplies. The Belgian magazines were lost, the military chest was empty, home and its resources were far distant. Coburg applied

to the neighbouring Sovereigns and Circles of Germany. He issued an earnest appeal for provisions and help for the sick to the inhabitants of the Rhine, but was unable to stir the dull and listless indifference of the politically neglected population. The foremost among the Princes, Maximilian, Elector of Cologne, and uncle of the Emperor, replied that since his last sojourn in Vienna he had long foreseen, from the cabals which he had witnessed there, the disasters which had since taken place. The Austrian government, he said, had begun the war against his advice. The way in which the war, and all the business connected with it, had been carried on would bring him eternal shame, if he could be supposed capable of taking any part in it. "You will therefore allow me, Cousin (Liebden)", he continued, "still to refrain from taking any part in the affair, and spare me all Viennese financial operations. If I had the happiness of facilitating your entrance into the Netherlands by a loan of ready money, you will hardly ask me to do the same to help you out. If your army will not stand its ground, or cannot check the advance of the enemy, any sums which I might possibly raise by the greatest exertions to supply the deficiencies in the Austrian treasury, would only serve to postpone by a few days the ruin of these countries, since no other help is to be looked for."

Beset by such impressions, bowed down by bodily suffering and deep despair, the Prince of Coburg sent in his resignation to the Emperor on the 9th of August.

Just at this time Lord Spencer and Thomas Grenville came to Vienna in order to induce the Austrian government to make one more effort on behalf of Belgium. Considering the great importance of their negotiations, it seems worth while to consider more closely the course which they took. By the instructions given to them on the 19th of July they were directed to demand immediate reinforcement of the Belgian army, the removal of its Commander-in-chief, and energetic action on the part of Austria in Italy; and

they were empowered to promise in return both ample subsidies from England, and general aid against any hostile movement which might be made by Prussia. On the journey they fell in with Count Mercy, who gave them the greatest encouragement, but at the same time remarked that the advance of the army for the relief of the fortresses was impossible. The defence of the line of the Meuse, he said, was secured, but yet he decidedly refused to make a public announcement of his views on this head. The English envoys, on arriving in Vienna, found Thugut perfectly ready to meet their views with respect to the recall of the Prince of Coburg, which he effected forthwith, and then entrusted the chief command of the Belgian army to General Clerfait, a man who belonged to no political party at all. Difficulties, however, immediately arose when they came to the consideration of the next demand of England, that Austria should employ a part of her Rhine army in the defence of Belgium. Thugut at once refused to do this, partly on the ground that the presence of those troops on the Rhine was indispensable, and partly because he could not without danger remove them so far from the Austrian frontiers. "In fact," he said, "nothing can be done until England guarantees us a loan of £ 3,000,000 for this campaign, and promises further subsidies for next year." Lord Grenville, he remarked, could very well transfer the subsidy hitherto paid to the Prussians to Austria, always so true to her engagements. "But then," he added, "it is necessary for England and Russia to take measures to secure us from any attacks of the king of Prussia. If Austria," he concluded, "is not supported in this manner, we must confine ourselves to defending the Rhine with an army of 30,000 to 40,000 men."

On the same day (August 12th) on which the Englishmen sent a report of this conversation to London, the Aulic Council of war sent off orders to Coburg and Sachsen-Teschen to defend, not Belgium, but Luxemburg, Mayence and Manheim, and not to retreat except under circumstances

of the greatest danger. Two days later a second imperial letter was sent to Coburg announcing the arrival of a reinforcement of three battalions, with an intimation that great things would be expected of him, provided always that Count Mercy sent favourable news from London. Coburg replied by return of courier, that under these circumstances, and considering the utter insufficiency of the promised reinforcement, successes in the field were out of the question. When Clerfait immediately afterwards assumed the chief command, some stir was made, not among the troops indeed, but in the war council. A new scheme was concocted with the Duke of York for the liberation of Antwerp, and an understanding was come to with Möllendorf for the recapture of Treves; and, indeed, from the dispersed state of the French troops, and the improvement in the condition of the allied army consequent on the long cessation of arms, important successes were by no means improbable. Everything depended, after all, as was intimated in the Emperor's letter to Coburg, on the fortunate issue of the negotiation with England; and as this was rendered impossible by Thuguts views, no warlike deeds resulted from all the fine words and brilliant plans of the council of war.

It was not granted to the old and steady friend of Belgium, Count Mercy, to renew his efforts in this affair. He died soon after his arrival in London, and his task was then undertaken by the ambassador Count Stahremberg. He brought the matter before the English Minister on the 26th of August, and dwelt in the first place on the points which Thugut had already raised—an immediate remittance of money, without which, he said, the army could not hold the line of the Meuse—a guarantee of a loan of £3,000,000, and a further subsidy for the following year— with the additional proviso, that in case Belgium should be recovered, its political constitution should be abrogated, and the country subjected to the will of the conquerors. The English Minister immediately granted £ 150,000, and communicated his

answer to the other demands through his ambassador in Vienna. Up to this time the impression made upon Spencer and Grenville by their intercourse with Thugut was by no means favourable. They repeatedly expressed, both in their official despatches and private communications, their utter hopelessness of attaining any satisfactory results. Thugut, they declared, manifested an entire indifference to the maintenance of Belgium and Holland, prophesied the failure of every effort in this direction, and continually resorted to fresh subterfuges. Even on the supposition, they urged, that Thugut was only feigning indifference on the subject, to incite England to increased exertions, the result of such a course would be the refusal of all Austrian aid on behalf of Belgium, whether it arose from real or pretended views. It was evident, they thought, that his disinclination to act with vigour in Belgium arose not merely from his habit of undervaluing this possession, but partly also from his conviction that the Maritime Powers would under no circumstances allow the French to rule in that country, and partly from the timid desire to collect all the Austrian forces on the German frontiers, and to keep them close at hand, in readiness to defend the hereditary lands against the Prussians. Such a divergence of views between England and Austria, they thought, would render the most formal compacts entirely ineffectual.[1] We shall soon see how correctly they had judged the state of the case.

On the 14th of September they communicated to Thugut the answer of England to the demands of Austria. It was in the main simply favourable. England was willing to undertake the guarantee of the loan, if the Emperor would increase the strength of his Belgian army to 100,000 men. She was willing to render pecuniary aid for the following

[1] Conf. the official reports of Spencer and Grenville in the English State Paper office, and their private correspondence in Buckingham's Memoirs of the court and cabinets of George III, Vol. II, 259.

year, by transfering, as Thugut had before suggested, the Prussian subsidy to Austria, if the Emperor would in return promise to furnish the same number of troops as were at present supplied by Prussia, *viz.* 60,000 men. In this case, Lord Grenville said, he remembered with pleasure what Thugut had previously intimated, that the Emperor would then procure money for the Prussians from the German Diet. To the overthrow of the Belgian constitution, he said, England could not possibly agree, and he thought that such a change would be injurious to Austria herself. He then proceeded to lay the greatest stress on the importance of a vigorous prosecution of the war, and to this end proposed that all the forces destined to operate in Belgium should be placed under one commander-in-chief. Hitherto the Duke of York had been under the command of the Prince of Coburg. England now determined to send her best general, Lord Cornwallis, to Belgium, and proposed that General Clerfait, as inferior in rank, should be placed under the orders of the English general.

England hereby consented to all that was required of her. If, therefore, Thugut's aversion to Belgium was only assumed for the purpose of rousing his ally to increased exertions, his object was now attained, and the time was evidently come to throw off the mask, and display his own energy in vigorous action. But this was far from being Thugut's intention. On the contrary he rejected the English proposals with the greatest vehemence. He declared that it would be an insult to the Emperor to place Clerfait under the command of Lord Cornwallis. He bitterly complained that England had done far less for the Emperor than for the King of Prussia, and had nevertheless asked three times as much from the former as from the latter. He protested that he cared nothing at all about the Prussian subsidy, and that if he could get any money from the German Diet, he would rather keep it himself than let Prussia have it. He concluded by declaring that under such circumstances he

was compelled to reduce the operations in Belgium to a limited scale.

Matters stood thus in Vienna in the middle of September, and the course of events on the theatre of war was in exact accordance with them. The fortresses in Hennegau and Flanders—Landrecy and Lequesnoi, Ostend and Niewport Condé and Valenciennes—had already capitulated in quick succession, without any serious resistance, as soon as the enemy allowed them to retire unmolested. The objects kept in view were everywhere the same, to give up the country, and preserve the armies; the French corps, therefore, which had been occupied in the siege of these places were once more at the disposal of the French government for the great war by the middle of September. Hereupon Clerfait sent a message to York, in which he declared the intended offensive movement useless, since its chief object—the relief of the fortresses—was frustrated by their fall. When York energetically protested, and adhered to his opinion of the necessity and usefulness of a vigorous advance, Clerfait replied by sending him an entirely different plan, the details of which seemed to the Duke of York and the Prince of Orange, in their turn, utterly impracticable.[1] In short complete inactivity reigned on all sides; the armies lay motionless in their widely extended cantonments as if in the deepest peace, dispirited by the remembrance of the failure of the summer campaign, and without self-reliance or confidence for the future. Such a state of things if long continued could not but end in a deep demoralisation of the troops, and the effects began to show themselves in the most striking manner among the English regiments. The supplies of these last had been not only plentiful but extravagant since the beginning of the campaign, but had nevertheless been rendered insufficient by negligence and waste. The troops were often without bread for days; but there was always an abundance of spirituous liquors, and the number of

[1] York to Dundas. September 7th.

women in the camp was sometimes almost equal to that of the soldiers. The men, moreover, were for the most part recruited from the rabble—the dregs of the British Proletariate—and we may easily imagine the revolting brutality which was the necessary consequence. In Flanders the evil had been in some degree checked by uninterrupted activity, and when it came to a head, necessity compelled the officers, and above-all the Commander-in-chief, to interfere with promptitude and vigour. But now the hopeless cessation of arms demoralised officers and men alike. The former, mostly rich young noblemen, without military training, who had purchased their commissions that they might serve in the campaign as a kind of chivalrous amusement, took no concern in the duties of their position or the welfare of their men, but lived in unbridled license, and set the worst example to the soldiers by remissness in the performance of their duty, and by coarse debauchery. It often occurred that the regiments set out on their march in the morning, while the officers remained behind for hours at some drinking bout, and then towards midday galloped half intoxicated after the column, and hurried past it with wild shouts, to the great annoyance of the men. It was not wonderful that the latter in a few weeks became quite unmanageable. Wherever they came they plundered the villages, ground the population to the dust, and spent the plundered property in riot and debauchery. In every conflict with the enemy the Germany auxiliaries—Hannoverians, Darmstädter and Hessians—bore the brunt of the battle; they resisted the bad example set them with admirable firmness, but were not numerous enough to preserve the discipline and unity of the army, in the face of the excesses of the English. Among the Dutch, now that the war reached their own borders, the old defects of their military system were most sensibly felt. Everywhere there was a want of trained soldiers and trustworthy officers, and in spite of the wealth of the State most of the fortresses were in

an unsatisfactory state of defence. In addition to this the inhabitants, in despair at the excesses of the English, bitterly cursed the whole war. They even longed for the arrival of the French, as liberators who would avenge them on their hateful allies; and this feeling once more roused their sympathies for the anti-Orange party—the patriots of 1788. The Duke of York saw the growing evil, in dull and helpless despair. He issued some *ordres du jour* in which he exhorted his troops in severe terms to better conduct; when this had no effect—when immediately afterwards the Austrians once more failed him, and the fall of the fortresses led him to expect an advance of the French in greater force—the Duke's mind was completely broken, and he looked forward to the catastrophe without the power of forming any resolution. On the 14th of September the advanced guard of the enemy's forces appeared before the out-posts of the allies at Herzogenbusch; and soon afterwards a division of Darmstädter was crushed by the superior numbers of the enemy, in spite of an heroic resistance; upon which York, who greatly overestimated the strength of the enemy at 80,000 men, only thought of securing his retreat over the Meuse. He resolved to evacuate the whole of North Brabant, and on the 16th led his army over the river into the United Provinces.[1]

At the same time Jourdan recommenced the attack on the Austrians at Liege. He had received a reinforcement of 27,000 from Hennegau, which made his army nearly equal to that of his opponent. He determined to employ it in dealing the main blow against the left, or south wing, of the Austrians upon the Ourthe, as it was evident that by overpowering this, he would threaten Clerfait's line of supplies and retreat more seriously than by any other operation. After having sent those 27,000 men under Marceau

[1] The particulars are given by by Ditfurth. "The Hessians in the Porbeck, "Critical History &c." and Netherlands" Vol. II.

and Scherer to the Ourthe he alarmed the centre of the enemy at Maestricht, on the 16th of September, by a vigorous feint, occupied Clerfait's whole attention, and then, suddenly withdrawing from the battle, he hastened over to Marceau with 12,000 men, so that he was able, on the 18th, to oppose nearly 40,000 men to General Latour and his 24,000. To make the matter worse the Austrian general had sent the half of this wing to the south to act as a support to the Treves expedition; so that the remnant on the Ourthe was defeated at all points by the more than triple force of the enemy, and forced to retreat with a loss of nearly 3,000 men. This was all the more to be lamented because the troops, restored to good discipline, and refreshed by their long repose, once more fought splendidly, and the French bought their victory at the price of nearly 6,000 killed and wounded. Even after the battle Latour was able to retreat in excellent order, and when the enemy attacked him a second time, on the 20th, at Henri Chapelle, he repulsed them with leavy loss. As the remaining divisions of the army numbered 60,000 men, there could, of course, be no talk of serious danger; nevertheless Clerfait immediately ordered a general retreat beyond the Roer, where his army then took up its position between Düren and Roermonde by the 23rd. Negotiations once more commenced with York on the one side, and Möllendorf on the other. Clerfait demanded that the former should undertake the protection of the fortress of Venloo on the Meuse to cover his northern wing, and that the latter should occupy Kaiseresch to strengthen his southern wing in the territory of Treves. If this were not done, he said, the left bank of the Rhine could no longer be defended. The two allied generals made some difficulties; York, however, sent a small detachment of Hanoverians to Venloo, and Kaiseresch was taken into the Prussian position; but no sooner had this been done, than Jourdan's columns appeared on the Roer and commenced an attack on the Austrians on the 2nd of

October. Wherever they showed themselves in any considerable strength the Imperialists retreated in excellent order, after a feeble resistance; they reached the bank of the Rhine on the 4th, and passed that river on the night of the 5th. The motives which led to these last operations of this unhappy campaign may be gathered, with sufficient certainty, from the official lists of the Austrian forces, for the period from the 21st of September to the 6th of October. The effective force of Clerfait's army was then 76,968 men; it was opposed by about 75,000 French, and it abandoned the left bank of the Rhine to the latter after a loss of 171 killed, 28 wounded and 468 missing.[1]

And thus what Thugut had given notice of was already effected, and the operations of the war were reduced to a limited scale. Without interfering any further in the affairs of Belgium, the Austrian army stood on German ground, ready at any moment to turn its arms, if necessary, against the Prussians. At the same time Thugut had the further satisfaction of bringing over the English Ministry—who thought

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[1] Austrian Military Journal p. 278, 282. We can easily understand, therefore, why Clerfait wrote to the Emperor on this occasion (Vivenot II, 285). "*Je sens toute l'importance de cette démarche, et les suites qu'elle peut avoir m'affligent sensiblement; mais si V. M. daigne réfléchir à notre position, j'ose espérer qu'Elle me rendra la justice d'être persuadé que je n'ai songé qu'au bien de son service, et que cette retraite en présence d'une armée nombreuse s'est faite sans précipitation, et n'a pas été l'effet de la crainte.*" Vivenot represents the retreat across the Rhine as the necessary result of the difficulties which the sovereigns of the left bank, especially the Elector of Cologne, threw in the way of supplying the army; but it is hardly necessary to show that an army of 75,000 would not starve in the country of Cologne and Juliers, one of the most fruitful in Germany, if its leader had taken the necessary steps; and that, on the other hand, the crossing the Rhine could not better its condition, as it came from the Cologne into the Palatine territory, whose Government Vivenot himself, in a hundred passages, proves to have been as negligent and hostile as that of the Archbishop of Cologne.

that a little aid against France was better than none—to the Austrian view of the case.

On the same day (September 14th) on which the diplomatic encounter between Thugut and Lord Spencer took place, Lord Grenville in London was drawing up entirely new instructions for his ambassador in Vienna. After the loss of the fortresses in Flanders and Hennegau, he had given up all hopes of defending Belgium, and made up his mind to accomodate himself still more closely to Thugut's views, in order at any rate to secure the aid of the Emperor for Holland, which was now threatened by the French. "We are ready," he said, "to fulfil the oft-repeated wish of Thugut, to confine the operations in Belgium within narrower limits than was at first intended." England likewise withdrew her claim to the command-in-chief over Clerfait's army, and her demand that the army in Belgium should be raised to 100,000 men. She declared her readiness to guarantee the loan of £ 3,000,000, —on the condition that Austria should continue her present exertions—and to secure to the Emperor any French provinces he might conquer. Thugut received this most welcome despatch on the 1st of October. He expressed his lively satisfaction, overflowed with good wishes and promises for Holland, but nevertheless had no intention of letting off his compliant ally so easily. In addition to the loan of £ 3,000,000 for the present campaign, Austria, he said, must have a second sum of equal amount for the following year. Lord Spencer and Thomas Grenville, who had long been weary of these barren negotiations, and well assured that Thugut cared far less about the French war than the contest in Poland, declared that they were without instructions on this head, and left all further discussion of it to the regular embassy. And thus ended Austria's operations on behalf of Belgium and the Lower Rhine.

This *denouement* of affairs had at last put an end to the oscillations of Prussian policy, and led to a first step towards a final settlement. We have seen above, that at the end of

August, when the last deliberations were held about the Austrian offensive movements, Möllendorf had promised his co-operation in the recovery of Treves and a simultaneous attack upon the French army of the Rhine. But during the same period he made another attempt to induce his sovereign to withdraw from the hopeless war. He interpreted the expressions of the King in the same sense as Lucchesini; and thought that however unimportant the permission to praise the blessings of peace in private might appear, it really denoted a decided turn in the mind of the King. Under this conviction he sent his adjutant, Major Meyerinck, to Berlin, to use his influence for the promotion of peace. He had long come to an understanding with Lucchesini respecting the general principle by which Prussian policy should be guided. They both wished that Prussia should come forward in Paris as representative of the German Empire, and make a peace in its name on the basis of the *status quo ante*. They believed that a negotiation of this kind, carried on with earnestness and zeal, could not fail of leading to good results. France, they thought, which would thus retain possession of the Austrian Netherlands, would be glad to secure so great an advantage by acknowledging the inviolability of the frontiers of the Empire, and including Holland in the treaty of peace. It might then be left to England and the Emperor, either to give up Belgium on condition of Austria's receiving compensation in some other quarter, as Thugut had long wished, or to exchange it for the conquered colonies, as had been already done in 1748, and as Montgaillard had now proposed.[1] In the existing state of the contending parties—the manifest retreat of the Austrians, and the deep exhaustion of France—this project was not without chances of success, and Germany, now that its Princes had long given

[1] Lucchesini unfolds this scheme and afterwards in many discussions in a despatch of the 6th of June, and memorials.

up the idea of restoring Louis XVII, might be well satisfied with such a result.

Meyerinck, therefore, found the King extremely accessible to his overtures. Since the retreat from Warsaw the mood of this Prince had become more and more inconsolable. The illusions by which he had allowed himself to be cheated into inactivity in Poland vanished at the very moment in which the consequences became irrevocable. "They will throw suspicion in St. Petersburg," he cried, "on our good will; the government at Vienna will use this weapon to destroy our influence in Russia." He now clearly saw that he ought to have displayed greater power in Poland, and for that purpose to have sought some settlement of affairs on the Rhine. He first of all consented that Lucchesini in Vienna should claim an auxiliary force of 20,000 men according to the February treaty, on the ground that Prussia was threatened in her own territory by the extension of the Polish insurrection. The intention was, as Austria was known to be unable to fulfil this demand, to justify Prussia in recalling the corps of the same strength, which she had hitherto maintained on the Rhine, and sending it off to Poland. In the next place the King thought Möllendorf's plan in every respect well suited to the circumstances of the case. He had a decided sense of his duties as a member of the Empire, and of the grand prospects which would be opened to Prussia if a national German policy were adopted. Möllendorf, therefore, exactly met his wishes when he called on him not to make a separate peace, but to mediate between France and Germany. The Marshal proposed to initiate the matter in a very innocent manner by a negotiation for an exchange of prisoners. As Prussia had a larger number in her hands than France, a truce might perhaps be gained for the Rhenish provinces of Prussia by the liberation of the surplus, even if a peace for the whole Empire were not immediately obtained. All this the King approved of. He still, indeed, thought that the

vexation of concluding a formal peace with the regicides might be spared, and a grand truce made—as *e. g.* Spain and Holland had done in 1609. He wished, moreover, not to address himself directly to Paris, but only to some diplomatist out of France. He thought that Meyerinck might enter into communication with some French diplomatist—but not in France—about an exchange of prisoners; and if an amicable conversation arose in this way, skilfully carry the matter further. Lucchesini pointed out Barthélemy, the French ambassador in Switzerland, as well adapted for this purpose, as a man of moderation and statesman-like views; and Möllendorf thereupon hastened to send off a merchant of Kreutznach, named Schmerz, to Baden near Zurich, where Barthélemy was then staying,[1] to enter into a preliminary conversation with him. At the same time he secretly applied (as far as we know even without the knowledge of the King) to the Elector of Mayence—as the chief dignitary of the Empire, and the one exposed to the greatest danger—acquainting him with the sentiments of the Prussian court, and exhorting him to induce the Diet to take a corresponding step.[2]

During these negotiations the time had arrived at which, according to the agreement with Clerfait, the operations against Treves and Kaiserslautern were to be carried into effect. If a peace were sought for the sake of protecting the frontiers of the Empire, the expulsion of the enemy

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[1] Lucchesini to Möllendorf, September 21. It was not therefore correct when in the beginning of 1795 the Committee of Public Safety announced to its ambassador in Copenhagen that Barthélemy had received the first overtures in the middle of August. — [2] Lucchesini to Möllendorf September 8th. That the King did not originate the step of Möllendorf is proved negatively from all the Prussian correspondence of the period, and positively by the assurance given by the Ministry to Cæsar in Vienna November 3rd. This did not, of course, prevent the King from approving and supporting the plan when it was brought forward by Mayence.

from the soil of the Empire would be entirely in accordance with this desire; and Möllendorf, accordingly, led 15,000 men to the Hundsrück, while Hohenlohe, by a rapid and victorious onslaught, drove the French from the eastern vallies of the Hardt mountains. But just at this moment the news of Clerfait's disasters on the Ourthe arrived, then of his retreat to the Roer, and lastly, of his final retirement across the Rhine. There could now be no longer any thought of an attack upon Treves. After the capture of Cologne by the French army of the Sambre, it would be impossible to maintain Coblentz and the Hundsrück for any length of time against the French army of the Moselle, and the necessary consequence must be the recall of Hohenlohe under the guns of Mayence. The loss of the whole left bank of the Rhine was now to be expected.

The matter was to be finally decided, as was always the case in this miserable state of affairs, not by military but by diplomatic considerations. As late as the 16th of October Möllendorf had sent a positive assurance to Duke Albert that he would risk a battle in his present position; three days afterwards he received peremptory orders to lead back the army to the right bank of the Rhine. This command gave the final death-blow to the long languishing alliance between England and Prussia.

The angry representations of Malmesbury had not, after all, been without their effect in London; they had been seconded by the Austrian intimations that the subsidy had better be transferred to the Emperor; and the continued ill success of the war on the Rhine at last decided the mind of Pitt. On the 1st of October the monthly payment was not forthcoming in Berlin. In answer to the Prussian enquiries on the subject, Pitt drily replied that England had resolved to discontinue the subsidy for the present. And when the ambassador remarked that Prussia would be obliged to regard this as a breach of the Hague treaty, the English Ministers rejoined that this consequence had been considered

before their resolution had been taken. And thus exactly a year after the dissolution of his relation with Austria, the King saw the last tie severed, by the breach of the English alliance, which bound Prussia to the Coalition; and there was now nothing to prevent the Berlin government from following the advice of those who maintained that Prussian policy should be centred, not in the French, but in the Polish, war. The King forthwith resolved to recall Möllendorf from the left bank of the Rhine, and at the same time to decree the sending off of 20,000 of his troops to Poland. In Vienna, Lucchesini, in the course of a long conversation with Thugut, formally proposed to make decided overtures of peace to the French. He pointed out that by a continuance of the war they were depriving the Moderate party in France of every chance of getting the upper hand, endangering the political existence of Holland, and thereby making the whole of Europe subservient to the Republicans. He urged Thugut to advocate at the English Court the conclusion of a peace on the principle of a mutual restoration of conquests; which, he thought, was the only means of inducing France, after her Rhenish victories, to grant reasonable terms. Thugut gave a favourable answer, saying that there was nothing he wished for more than peace on any decent conditions, and that he also thoroughly approved of the Prussian idea of a long truce. But a new incident too soon convinced the Marquis that Thugut might, indeed, make a separate peace with France, or perhaps continue the war with the assistance of Russia and England; but that it was inconceivable that he should ever unite with Prussia in a common negotiation for the furtherance of an understanding between France and the German Empire. Marshal Möllendorf's hint had so far had its effect on the Elector of Mayence, that he brought a motion in favour of peace before the Diet; in which, however—either in consequence of an application made by him at Vienna, or from his own knowledge of the jealousy against Prussia which prevailed there

—he proposed, not the King of Prussia, but the Courts of Copenhagen and Stockholm, as mediators. From the well known leaning of the Swedish monarch to France, this change was not quite agreeable to the Court of Berlin, which, nevertheless, hastened to give its full support in the Diet to the proposition, even in this form. Thugut, on the contrary, spoke very contemptuously of it, and declared it to be a concealed effort on the part of Prussia to destroy the influence of Austria in the Empire. "In a conversation with Thugut," wrote Lucchesini to his Court, "about this proposal, I have come to the full conviction that he will not agree to any peace at present; it is true that neither Holland nor the Empire can look for any assistance from him, but he will not agree to our wish to bring about a truce; England and Russia urge him to continue the war, and he is once more entering into their plans, because he hopes by this course to gain some advantage in the Polish partition."

Lucchesini had not indeed seen everything, but he was right in the main. The successful prosecution of the war had been hindered by the dissensions of Austria and Prussia, and now a common negotiation for peace was rendered impossible by the same causes. Thugut was in fact on the point of joining Russia, not with a view to general pacification, but to conquest in all quarters. His long vacillation was now put an end to by the issue of affairs in Poland, which had just then ended in a fearful catastrophe.

After the retirement of the Prussians, Warsaw had begun to breathe again, and its inhabitants once more enjoyed a happy day after the lapse of many weeks of almost hopeless despair—a joyful moment in the midst of numerous and overwhelming dangers. For even now the Polish cause was in a very critical state in the Eastern parts of the theatre of war. In Lithuania the Russian general Knorring had taken Wilna, the capital, after a brave resistance, on the

12th of August. Colonel Grabowski had retreated thence towards the east, to make an adventurous attempt upon the Russian province of Minsk, but was overtaken by Prince Sicianow, and made prisoner with his whole force. Similar expeditions of other Polish generals into Samaiten and Courland also failed, and at the beginning of September the new Commander-in-chief in this quarter, General Mokranowski, found himself obliged to draw back all the forces which were left him—about 20,000 men—into the neighbourhood of Grodno, on the borders of Poland Proper. Further to the south, in the district of Brzesc-Litewski on the Bug, stood General Sierakowski with 13,000 men to watch the corps of General Derfelden, and to hold in check any attacks which might be made from the Ukraine. He had received vague intelligence that General Suworow was approaching from that quarter with a powerful force, and he sent urgent petitions for reinforcement to Warsaw. Such was the state of things in the east. The Russian General Fersen had withdrawn from Warsaw at the same time as the Prussians, but had immediately separated from the latter, and had marched by himself up the Vistula to the South, in order, if possible, to pass that river and form a junction with Derfelden and Suworow. Hereupon Kosciusko sent Prince Poninski up the right bank of the stream with instructions to keep Fersen always in sight, and to prevent him at all hazards from crossing the Vistula. A very signal success might perhaps have been gained if Kosciusko had led all the forces at his disposal out of Warsaw in pursuit of Fersen, immediately after the retirement of the Prussians; the completely isolated Russian corps could in that case have hardly escaped a terrible fate. But instead of this the rulers in Warsaw were induced by the uncertainty of the attitude assumed by Prussia, and the progress of the insurrection in Posen, to throw all the disposable troops towards this side, and thereby, for the sake of trifling advantages, to leave free scope for the Russian operations. Generals Madalinski

and Dombrowski advanced from Warsaw with 3,000 men towards the west, passed the Bzurra, broke through the weak Prussian cordon, and poured into the South Prussian provinces, where the courage of the insurgents was revived by their arrival, and their number increased to 4,000, so that Dombrowski was enabled to meet the Prussian divisions posted there—about 7,000 men under Major-General Schwerin, and Colonel Szekuly—with equal forces. He was himself far superior to his opponents in boldness, energy and military skill; he continually came upon them where they least expected him, and vanished when they followed him with their united forces. By these means he utterly annihilated Szekuly's divisions, occupied Bromberg and threatened Thorn; the whole of South Prussia was filled with alarms of war, and the Polish partisans began to raise their heads even in West Prussia and Dantzic. The Prussian government was in no little perpexity. They were not willing to expose the main army, which now formed a long cordon between Posen and Warsaw, because they would then have to expect that fresh Polish forces would be despatched from Warsaw. They could not draw any reinforcements from East Prussia, because the enemy's Lithuanian army was just on its retreat to Grodno and passing close to the Prussian borders, which therefore needed to be strongly guarded. They did not venture to bring up any considerable reinforcements from Cracow and Sendomir, because they wished not only to defend these provinces from an attack of the Poles, but to prevent the entrance of the Austrians. They therefore made shift as they could, gradually collected a reinforcement of 1,200 men from various quarters, and in the first place secured West Prussia from a further spread of the insurrection. But this state of anxiety did not last long. While Dombrowski was keeping the Prussians on the alert on the Vistula, the first flashes of the destructive storm were descending upon Poland on

the Bug, and Kosciusko was consequently obliged to recall the victorious general in all haste to Warsaw.

Since the month of May General Suworow had undertaken the chief command of the Russian troops in the Ukraine and Red Russia. This remarkable man, who had lately filled the world with the fame of his victories over the Turks at Rimnik and Ismael, and had spread the terror of his name through Poland twenty years before; was born in 1729, and was therefore at this time in the 65th year of his age. His father was a respectable senator, and he himself was originally destined for the profession of the law, and was on that account not entered at his birth on the roll of a regiment of guards—as was usually the case with young noblemen in Russia, in order that they might begin actual service in their 16th year, perhaps as major. But the germs of military talent developed themselves in the boy with such force, that the father soon saw the impossibility of resisting his inclinations; and when he was twelve years old he very reluctantly allowed him to take his own course. And thus without any interest or patronage he passed through the lower grades, as private in the Fusileers, then as corporal and sergeant, until after 14 years of hardship he at last attained the highest object of his ambition—the commission of a lieutenant. During this long period of probation he adopted the external habits of life which made him, as Prince of the Empire, and Field-marshal under two Emperors, the wonder of the world—the habits of a common Russian soldier. Like his comrades he slept on straw, rose at 4 o'clock in the morning, took a frugal breakfast at 9 o'clock, and slept at any hour of the day which might be convenient. Like them he kissed the images of the saints with devout prayers, pronounced the name of the Emperor with fervent devotion, and acquired the tone of serious or jesting talk which is used with good effect in the intercourse between sergeant and musketeer. But at the same time he studied with restless and incessant

zeal the great models on which he wished to form himself —the deeds of the Roman commanders, the campaigns of Montecuculi, the adventures of Charles XII. From the former of these he sought to learn patient and inexhaustible prudence, but took as the standing maxim of his life the words of the Swedish King—"let the cowards shoot, but do you come to close quarters as soon as possible." And thus, having once entered on his career, he proved his quality from first to last, whether as a bold and cunning partisan in the Seven years war, or as commander-in-chief against the Turks; and in these he never appeared without making a furious onset, and never fought without annihilating his enemy. His men worshipped him, although he made them march nearly 50 miles a day, squandered their blood in streams where he deemed it essential to his object, and was accustomed to admonish the negligent with cuffs and kicks. They knew not only that he led them to certain victory and booty, and shared every toil and danger with them, but that every man amongst them had a personal relation to him, saw how he cared for their food and clothing, how he stroked and patted the brave men, and enlivened the company with the grotesque fun of the barracks. He needed and asked but little for himself; after his first victories he accepted with loud expressions of gratitude some orders and a sword of honour from the hands of his Empress, but begged her to withhold a dotation of money and lands, until he had sons grown up to whom he might transfer the favours of his sovereign. Such was the man who was now preparing to destroy Poland—full of intellect, yet coarse; good humoured, yet merciless; and above all things restless to his last breath as long as a man of the enemy was still standing. "No long manœuvring—no long firing—forward with the cold steel—down with them all, crush them all—all!"—this was now his battle cry, as it was five years afterwards, in his great struggle with the French Revolution. As soon as he scented the battle from afar, he was seen to chafe at the

barriers which his own firm prudence had placed to the impetuosity of his fiery love of battle, until his keen eye saw that the time was come, and then let loose the impetuous torrent of arms.

On the 14th of August he started from Niemirow in Podolia with only 8,000 chosen troops, with which he marched about 370 miles in three weeks, united two divisions of 4,000 men under Markow and Buxhövden with his own on the way, and in the middle of September reached the neighbourhood of the Polish general Sierakowski near Brzesc on the Bug. The prisoners who were brought in by Cossacks reported that Sierakowski, being only informed of the approach of Markow and Buxhövden, had made some days march to the east into Podolia to meet them, and to anticipate their attack. Soon afterwards, however, fresh intelligence arrived that the Polish general, alarmed by the capture of some of his skirmishing parties, now only thought of defending himself, and had strongly entrenched himself in a camp behind widely extended and impassable swamps not far from Krupcyce. Hereupon Suworow, without regarding these difficulties, gave immediate orders for the attack on the morning of the 17th of September. After a violent cannonade the Russian infantry was drawn up in two columns, which with cool contempt of death began to cross the swamp. Amidst a shower of shot from the enemy's batteries they worked their way through the mud, suffering fearful losses, but still advancing until they reached the opposite bank. There they formed in haste as well as circumstances would allow, and without firing a shot rushed upon the enemy with the bayonet. An obstinate struggle ensued, and the issue remained for a long time doubtful, but at last the Russian discipline and skill in arms prevailed over the gallant but ill-trained enemy, and Sierakowski—who still preserved tolerable order—resolved to retreat to Brzesc. He formed his centre and wings into a large square with the cavalry on both flanks, and retreated slowly

and continually fighting towards the Bug. He suffered another severe loss when the Russian cavalry, in the course of the afternoon, crossed the swamp and fell upon the Poles. But meanwhile the night was approaching, and the Poles reached a wooded country which afforded them the wished-for shelter, whereupon Suworow gave up the pursuit. Both sides had suffered heavy losses; the Poles left 3,000 men on the field, and reached Brzesc wearied and dispirited by the result of their first collision with the dreaded Suworow. Sierakowski, however, protected as he was by the broad stream of the Bug, hoped for a few days rest; and having barred the bridge which connects the town with the opposite shore, by a battery of two guns, he sent off urgent petitions to Kozciusko in Warsaw for reinforcements.

But his enemy would not grant him sufficient time. During the very night after the late battle he had advanced nearly 12 miles towards Brzesc; and on the 13th sent forward his light troops to reconnoitre the country and the river, in order to make a second attack on Sierakowski as soon as possible. A jew from Brzesc now appeared at his head-quarters, and after declaring himself a bitter enemy of the Polish government, told the general of several fords on the south of the city, which the army might pass without any danger whatever. Suworow did not lose a moment. At 2 o'clock on the morning of the 19th the troops began their march, waded in the darkness through the marshy ground of a small tributary stream, reached the Bug at early dawn, which they found entirely undefended at this point, and arrived in excellent order on the Polish side of the river. Meanwhile their approach had been observed, and had caused the most terrible excitement in the surrounding country. The alarm-bells rang from all the churches of the city and neighbourhood; in Brzesc the inhabitants poured into the churches to implore the aid of Heaven; the Polish soldiers ran to and fro in the greatest confusion, and Sierakowski, who had spent the night in

play and drinking, came from his quarters completely taken by surprise, and seeing that the Russians had already crossed the river gave orders for an immediate retreat. He formed his infantry into three great squares, which could move side by side over the vast plain, and would, as he thought, be equally prepared to fight or march. In this way, as he had about an hour's start of the enemy, he expected to escape his pursuers. But Suworow, who perceived the object of this movement, pushed on with his cavalry, regardless of the numbers of the enemy, and gave orders that when any of his regiments overtook a Polish division they should charge, again and again, and at any cost prevent the escape of the foe. While there was this iron resolution on the one side, a feeling of anxious despair had, from the very first, prevailed among the Poles. The very qualities which are most indispensable to success in battles fought during a retreat—order, coolness, obstinate determination—were all wanting among the raw troops of the Poles; and even their officers were far inferior to the Russian in the art of skilful manœuvring and in readiness in taking advantage of the ground. The individual Polish soldier fought, indeed, with desperate gallantry, but the position of the army grew worse at every step. The Russian cavalry kept continually charging; battalion after battalion of the Poles was broken: in every village and every wood where they hoped to find a cover their indefatigable enemy was before them. At last, towards noon, the Russian artillery also came up, and decided the issue after two hours' fighting. The Polish columns were all broken and dispersed; and as the soldiers defended themselves with desperate fury they were almost all cut down. Of about 10,000 men, a few hundreds only escaped with Sierakowski; 500 were taken prisoners, and all the others perished beneath the swords of the Russian cavalry.

It was the intelligence of this dreadful disaster which threw Warsaw into a fever of consternation, and induced

Kosciusko to unite all the forces at his disposal to meet the most pressing danger. For if the fate of Poland could still be deferred, it was essential to beat down the adversary who had so powerfully and rapidly brought war in its most terrible shape upon the land. Kosciusko therefore ordered Dombrowski to return from Prussia to Warsaw, and sent instructions to Mokranowski to lead the Lithuanian army southward from Grodno to Bielka, in order to threaten the eastern flank and rear of Suworow from that side. He sent General Kniaczewitsch with about 2,000 men to meet the remnant of Sierakowski's army, and hastened after him in person with 8,000 men of the Warsaw garrison, in order to attack Suworow with these united forces in front, as soon as the Lithuanians should have advanced far enough towards the south. Suworow on his part had taken up a position in Brzesc after the last victory, made some addition to his forces, and before penetrating further into the interior of Poland waited for news of Derfelden, who was at that time moving upon Grodno, and of Fersen, who was still on the other side of the Vistula, and was cut off by Poninski from all communication with Suworow. Fersen, as we may easily imagine, was extremely impatient to re-establish his communications with Russia, and for weeks he tried every artifice and feint to deceive Poninski, and effect the passage of the Vistula. Just about the time when Kosciusko began to move against Suworow, Fersen made a fresh attempt; by several feigned movements he convinced Poninski that he intended to cross the river at Pulawy, and while the latter massed his troops at that point, he succeeded in leading his men across the stream at Koszenice at no great distance off. Hereupon Poninski, still labouring under his mistake, sent word to the commander-in-chief that a small body of Russians had reached the right bank. Kosciusko immediately determined to drive them into the Vistula before the main body could come to their aid, and hastened with his 10,000 men to meet an enemy far inferior, as he believed, in num-

bers. He came to Okrzeja, only a few miles distant from Fersen's army; but there he received intelligence from all quarters which soon left no doubt of the mistake which he had made; as matters stood, however, a battle was unavoidable. He therefore retreated into as favourable a position as he could find near Maciejowice, where he entrenched himself, and sent orders to Poninski to join him as soon as possible. But the real state of the case now became clear to Fersen also; he was no longer hampered by political considerations towards Prussia, and at once resolved to attack. On the night of the 9th of October he sent General Denisow with 4 battalions, 10 squadrons, and 6 regiments of Cossacks, by a long circuitous route through wood and swamp, against the left flank of the enemy. He himself then started soon after midnight to assault Maciejowice in front. They both reached the Polish lines about the same time, in the first grey of the morning; their troops were for the most part the same which had been driven out of Warsaw in April, and which now burned with desire to retrieve the honour of their arms, and appease the manes of so many murdered comrades by the blood of the Poles. The wild hand to hand fight which ensued lasted for six hours; Kosciusko exhausted all the resources of his genius, and his recruits fought with the courage of desperate men, but soon after midday Russian discipline and tactics once more prevailed, and the Polish position was forced at several points. The Russians gave no quarter on this day, but with the cry "Remember Warsaw!" mercilessly cut down the fugitives. 6,000 Poles lay dead upon the field, 1,600 were wounded and taken prisoners, and scarcely 2,000 escaped to join Poninski and retire with him to Warsaw. Kosciusko had fought in the thickest of the battle till the very last; when all was over he too turned to fly, but was overtaken by an old Cossack named Potopyn. He was riding a bad and jaded horse, after having had two others shot under him, and wore a white peasant's blouse, so that his pursuer

did not recognise the general, and, as he would not surrender, wounded him with his lance, and pierced his horse by a second thrust. The animal reared, and took a long jump into the swamp. Kosciusko was thrown over its head and sank up to his shoulders in the mud. Again he struggled to his feet and tried to fly, when a Russian Cavalry officer rode up and struck him on the head, and he fell without uttering a sound.[1] He was then brought into the castle of Maciejowice, his wounds were carefully attended to, and he was afterwards sent by order of Suworow to Kiew, and handed over to the care of the aged Field-marshal Romanzow.

This blow was decisive in every point of view. It was the third bloody defeat; it was a new and terrible loss of men and arms; but it was, more than all, the irreparable loss of their leader which sealed the fate of the Poles. In him the only bond was destroyed which had held, and only just held, the contending factions together; the soldiers had lost all confidence in themselves, their leaders and their cause; a universal feeling of dull despair brooded over the land. The National Council, indeed, at the instigation of Kollontai appointed General Wawrzecki, of the Lithuanian army, Commander-in-chief of the forces, and repeated the orders to all the divisions to repair with all speed to Warsaw, and repel the Russians as they had done the Prussians a few months before. But there was not a man in this unhappy country who still confided in the future, or believed in the possibility of success. The peasants threw down their scythes and ran away by hundreds; the soldiers wept over the loss of Father Thaddaeus, suspected treachery on every side, and shouted for joy when any one spoke of the chance of an honourable capitulation. The thought of negotiating was

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[1] Report of an eye-witness, No. 702. Conf. Berlin Journals and Prussian *Militär-Wochenblatt* 1829. Moniteur, 30 *Brum.*

no longer a deadly crime; on the contrary the citizens only disputed whether they should deliver up the city to the Russians or the Prussians, and the Supreme Council of war would probably itself have made the proposal, if Kollontai and General Zajonczek had not, even under the depressing circumstances, demanded the continuance of the contest, and branded every idea of yielding as the meanest treachery. Even the latter, it is true, could point out no means of deliverance. Wawrzecki represented that they could not possibly hold their ground against the Russians on the right bank of the Vistula, and that consequently they ought to evacuate and burn the suburb of the city, called Praga, which lay on that side, and defend themselves by the stream alone against the attacks of the enemy. Zajonczek was of the same opinion, and thought that they would in that case still retain force enough to continue their attacks on Prussia. But no sooner did they begin to unfold their plan to the National Council, than the latter declared that it was utterly impracticable, since the Russians could batter down every house in Warsaw from Praga, and that under the pressure of such a calamity the population of the capital would immediately enforce a surrender. Whereupon they resolved to defend Praga also, and began to throw up fortifications round it. It was a slight consolation in the midst of the general depression, that Prince Poniatowski succeeded by repeated attacks on the Prussian cordon on the Bzurra in occupying the whole attention of the unsteady and timid Count Schwerin, so that Dombrowski and Madalinski, who had still more than 4,000 men, easily eluded their pursuers and reached Polish ground in safety. The King of Prussia was furious at this remissness of his officers, and urged them all the more vehemently, by repeated orders, to advance upon Warsaw, and not to leave to the Russians alone the glory of striking the decisive blow. But whether it was personal incapacity on the part of his generals, or the effects of the evil example which had been given during the summer cam-

paign, the Prussian troops continued in their listless inactivity, and contented themselves with maintaining their positions on the Bzurra and the Narew in a few skirmishes of outposts.

Suworow, meanwhile, on receiving intelligence of the battle of Maciejowice had sent off instructions both to Fersen and Derfelden to march straight to Warsaw, without any further delay, and to join him at Minski a few miles from Praga. The haste with which these marches were effected, in consequence of the impetuous urgency of Suworow, brought destruction to a third Polish army—the Lithuanian—which, in obedience to the former commands of Kosciusko, was retiring in three columns from Grodno to Warsaw. One of them came into collision with Derfelden, suffered some loss, but avoided further fighting by a hasty retreat, and then reached the capital without molestation. The second met with no enemy at all. The third, under General Mayen, on the contrary, fell into the hands of Suworow and Fersen, who had just effected their junction at Minski, and came upon the Poles at Kobilka on the 26th of October, and again with greatly superior numbers. As at Brzesc it was an engagement between brave but loose and ill-trained infantry, and fiery and impetuous cavalry, well officered and confident of victory. The greater part of the column was dispersed and cut to pieces, and this new disaster completed the discouragement of the Polish troops in Warsaw. Mokranowski laid down his command immediately after his arrival; in fact there was but one voice among all parties, that the weak defences before Praga were untenable. Ignatius Potocki thought that rather than expose themselves to the horrors of a storm, it would be better to draw up the troops in a defensive position in front of the works of Praga. But Zajonczek declared that this was only a half measure, unless the troops which now stood opposed to the Prussians were quickly recalled to Praga, and a last attempt with superior numbers made against Suworow. No one else was found to support so desperate a measure, because, it was

said, it would not do to leave the field open to the Prussians; so that, after all, the resolution was adhered to of defending the works before Praga as long as possible. During these barren deliberations on the part of the Poles, their inexorable enemy had not lost a moment. Immediately after the victory of Kobilka he ordered all preparations to be made for taking Praga by storm. At the same time he made the most urgent appeals to the Prussians, to general Schwerin, and to the king himself, to support his operations by a closer blockade, and an assault upon Warsaw on the left bank of the Vistula. Those pitiable jealousies of the preceding summer found no place in the strong and straightforward character of Suworow; he looked only to the grand object of the war—the speediest suppression of the hated revolt—and he was ready to use the Prussian forces for this purpose as well as his own. In his violent style, which was often rendered confused by over haste, he wrote to Schwerin on the 30th: "as soon as General Derfelden has joined me, which he must do in a few days, I shall proceed with firm step to the decisive assault upon Praga. Warsaw shall cease to exist; to see insurgent brothers wandering on this bank, to annihilate them, and to plant there the standard of the mighty Empress, as a fearful warning to the faithless capital—that is the grand object."

Notwithstanding his national hatred of the Poles, Suworow would have preferred a surrender on conditions; it was principally on this account that he desired the co-operation of the Prussians, in order to reduce the city to submission by increasing famine. But Schwerin remained in his imperturbable repose. In Warsaw the peace party did not quite venture to come forward openly, and Derfelden arrived in Kobilka on the 1st of November. Thereupon Suworow encamped, on the 3rd, close in front of the works of Praga, and the same day gave orders for the storming on the following morning. He wrote to Schwerin a few hours before the beginning of the battle: "With God's help

I hope to make further progress. The ruling party of desperate men give little sign of capitulation; let their fate be the cold and smoking steel (*sic*) which they have drawn down on their own heads." He then drew the details of the plan to be pursued after the taking of Praga, hoped that Schwerin would appear at the same time on the western side of Warsaw, and thought that care, famine, and misery, or a few hours of resolute fighting, would complete the great work. He was then prepared, in all good faith, to share the honours of the glorious result with Prussia.

Immediately after midnight, on the 4th of November, the troops began to mount three large batteries, of 22, 16, and 48 guns respectively, and towards 3 o'clock in the morning they opened a heavy fire on the defences of the enemy. The violence of the bombardment led the Poles to think that Suworow did not intend to storm the place, but to take it by a regular siege. Zajonczek, however, who, with the Lithuanian Jasinski, had taken the command in Praga, sent over to Warsaw to ask Wawrzecki to send him as many of the National Guard as possible to defend the works. He had about 8,000 troops of the line, and all the inhabitants of Praga who were fit for service—about 1,800 men; in addition to which Wawrzecki now despatched 3,000 Warsaw citizens in all haste. The intrenchments ran at a considerable distance from the houses in a wide circuit round the suburb of Praga, and there was a second line of earthworks within it for the immediate protection of the place. The fire of the Russian batteries grew hotter and hotter, and the Poles, occupied by this, did not observe that under cover of the winter night the Russian army of 22,000 men, in seven columns, was taking up its position close to the intrenchments, and preparing to attack. At 5 o'clock Suworow gave the signal agreed upon, by a rocket; and the troops, filled with the remembrance of the bloody days of Warsaw, and intoxicated, partly by drink, and partly by the assurance of victory, threw themselves

with infinite fury into the ditches, and then up the slope of the earthworks. The Poles, badly supplied with provisions during the confusion of the last few days, worn out by hunger, cold, and despair, were completely taken by surprise, and only offered serious resistance at a few points. Jasinski, who had told his friends that he would not outlive a defeat, fell in the *melée*, and Zajonczek was severely wounded in the very first hour. When day broke he saw his men in disorderly flight in all directions, and escaped with difficulty over the bridge to Warsaw, at the very moment when the first column of the enemy reached the extremity of it, and thus cut off the great mass of the Polish garrison from the only chance of deliverance. Without leaders, and desperate as they were, these unhappy men resisted to the last, each where he happened to stand. The Russians fought with unspeakable fury, and for a long time gave no quarter and made no prisoners; and as the citizens fled into their houses for shelter they drew their pursuers after them. A number of unarmed and aged men, and even women and children, were butchered; a Prussian officer who happened to be present, tried to save a boy from the bayonet of a Russian, who replied: "Down with him; when he is grown up he will murder one of my brothers", and drove his sword through the poor child's heart. At the same time the fire of the artillery caused a conflagration in many parts of the town, and burning houses fell over heaps of corpses, and blocked up the streets with their ruins; while hundreds and hundreds of despairing fugitives sought refuge in the waves, and perished miserably beneath the bullets of their pursuers. At last the Russian officers made their voices heard amidst this scene of horror, succeeded in restraining the Poles from further resistance, and their own men from further butchery, and rescued several thousand Polish prisoners from the smoking ruins. It was about 9 o'clock when the Russians found themselves in complete possession of Praga; the battle had only lasted four hours, but in this short time 1,400

Russians had been killed or wounded, 2,000 Poles had perished in the river, and more than 10,000 by the sword of the enemy. This was *finis Poloniae!* [1]

Meanwhile the din of the alarm-bells was resounding through Warsaw; the soldiers stood about the streets in smaller or larger groups filled with impotent fury; the mob ran wildly about in furious excitement crying that they were betrayed. The bridge was broken down to prevent the sudden incursion of the Russians. And thus, without any possibility of bearing assistance, they saw the flames of Praga rising to Heaven, heard the thunder of the battle, the cries of the dying, and after midday were themselves threatened by the balls of a Russian battery which was erected on the opposite shore. After a night of unspeakable anxiety and confusion, the municipality, on the following morning, came to the resolution to bring the matter to a conclusion at any sacrifice, and sent envoys to the Russian general to ask his conditions, and to beg for a truce in the name of the citizens. Suworow, with all the pride of a victor, had seen his troops on the walls of Praga on the morning of the 4th; and in this mood he had written to Count Schwerin the following short letter, instead of any detailed report: "Here I am with my troops decked with the garlands of victory." [2] But at the sight of the blood-drenched streets he was deeply moved, caused the Polish prisoners to be well cared for, and gave

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[1] Life of Suworow II, 236, in which the Polish garrison is estimated at 30,000 men, the number of killed at 15,000, and of prisoners at 14,000. The Polish reports say that besides the garrison 15,000 peaceful inhabitants were slain. Yet in 1788, acc. to Büsching's precise statements, Praga had only 6,680 inhabitants, and of these (Treskow, 316, from an eye-witness) 1,800 had taken part in the fight. [2] We cannot vouch for the well-known version of his letter to the King of Prussia: "Praga smokes, Warsaw trembles. On the walls of Praga. Suworow."

the envoys the most favourable answer. If the Polish troops would immediately lay down their arms, he promised them personal liberty, and security of life and property. He was ready also to guarantee the persons and possessions of the inhabitants, and to grant entire oblivion of the past. The plenipotentiaries were pleasantly surprised, and wished to thank the general for his clemency. On entering his tent they found him sitting on the ground; when he caught sight of them he rose hastily, called out "peace, peace"! embraced them, and begged them to settle affairs as quickly as possible. Yet from the unhinged state of affairs which prevailed in Warsaw, several days passed before any final arrangement could be come to. The majority of the troops, it is true, deserted by hundreds, and subsequently by thousands, but still many of them would not hear of giving up their arms, and these found a number of dangerous associates among the populace; so that, in the night of the 6th, a riot took place, in which the citizens friendly to the municipality were obliged to prevent the abduction of King Stanislaus by force of arms. On the 7th, however, Wawrzecki brought the remains of the army out of Warsaw, after which the capitulation with Suworow was formally signed, and on the 8th the Russians took possession of the city in solemn procession. So fearful had been the confusion and suspense of the last few days, that many of the inhabitants thronged to meet their subjugator with a feeling approaching to joyful gratitude, for affording them, at any rate, rest and personal safety. Suworow himself was affected, and we may well believe that he spoke from his heart when he said: "I thank Thee, Almighty God, that thou hast not made me pay so dearly for these keys as"—here his voice was choked; he looked towards Praga, and the people about him broke out into loud weeping and sobbing. He then rode in silence through the greeting multitude to his quarters, and the greater part of the troops immediately marched

out of Warsaw to complete the disarming of the Polish army. It took ten days more to effect the dispersion of the latter, and at last Wawrzecki, who had marched westwards to Sendomir, also laid down his arms. Madalinski, who had previously separated from him, was stopped in South Prussia; and Zajonczek, on his flight towards Galicia, by Harnoncourt. To those Polish officers who gave their parole Suworow kept the promise made at the capitulation, and dismissed them unmolested to their homes. But the political chiefs, Ignatius Potocki, Zakrzewski, Kapustas and Kilinski, were sent by order of the Empress to St. Petersburg, where they were kept in decent confinement.

And thus the last general rising of the Polish nation ended in utter ruin. What other result was possible, when this great and gifted people had for two whole centuries been committing moral and political suicide? The catastrophe fell with fearful violence on the guilty and innocent alike—a catastrophe than which the world has witnessed nothing more appalling since the destruction of Jerusalem. Before such a spectacle we would gladly veil our eyes: we should begin to doubt of justice and of Providence, did we not see even here that nations only grow old and die when they have previously laboured to bring about their own ruin. Poland perished because her own sins had rendered her incapable of resisting her iron-clad neighbours. But the latter were soon to learn what it is for mortal men to make themselves the instruments of the Divine judgments. They now saw themselves at the height of prosperity and success, each of them in possession of extensive provinces of the sacrificed land. But the poison of their own and others' guilt adhered inseparably to the booty, and at the very moment in which they stretched forth their hands to seize their ill-gotten gains, a righteous retribution overtook them. It came upon them in the shape

of the bitter irreconcilable discord which had separated them from the beginning of the war, which continually increased in violence during its course, and was now, by a sudden and open outbreak, to bring to a miserable conclusion the crisis which had weighed upon Europe during the last five years.

CHAPTER IV.

TREATY OF PARTITION BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.

PRUSSIA SENDS COUNT TAUENZIEN TO ST. PETERSBURG.—HIS NEGOTIATION WITH SUBOFF.—RUSSIA REFUSES TO GRANT PRUSSIA'S DEMANDS.—AGITATION IN WESTERN GERMANY IN FAVOUR OF PEACE WITH FRANCE.—THE PRUSSIAN GOVERNMENT RESOLVES TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS OF PEACE IN BASLE.—FRESH INSTRUCTIONS SENT TO TAUENZIEN.—POLICY OF AUSTRIA.—OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE IN ST. PETERSBURG.—DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PRUSSIA AND THE IMPERIAL COURTS.—TREATY OF ST. PETERSBURG BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.—THE GERMAN DIET DESIRES PEACE WITH FRANCE.

RUSSIA, as we have seen,—after the Prussians had entered Poland, and, in consequence, the Emperor Francis at Thugut's suggestion had returned to Vienna,—sent word to the two German Powers, on the 23d of July, that the fate of the unhappy land must at last be settled by a common negotiation between its three powerful neighbours. Prussia, which had since that time been impatiently looking for the opening of a conference, was in no doubt as to its own wishes. The instructions of Count Tauenzien, who was to be sent as the new ambassador to St. Petersburg, comprised the following ideas.[1] First, that after the outbreak of the war with Poland, a Third partition would be much better justified than the two preceding ones, and was confidently to be looked for, although the Imperial Courts had not yet

[1] The draft of these instructions was made by the King, according to Lucchesini's proposals, as early as the 1st of July; they were completed on the 11th in Berlin, and sent off to Tauenzien on the 20th of August. These, as well as the following statements, are taken from the Prussian Staats-Archiv.

made any communication to the King on the subject. It was more especially certain that Austria would not remain inactive, but would hasten, after her military reverses in Belgium, to make peace with France, and seek compensation in Poland; but the Emperor, although he had sent a small corps into Lublin, could not, it was supposed, compare his claims with those of Prussia, who had employed all her forces against Poland. Further, it was stated that the King wished for all the country between Silesia, South Prussia, and the Vistula, and that he considered it desirable that there should be a narrow stripe of neutral territory between the Russian and Prussian acquisitions. This principality he thought of offering to Suboff, on condition that he would support Prussia against the claims of Austria, and use his influence to increase the Prussian share still further, by a slice of Szamaiten between the Baltic, the frontiers of Courland, and the river Windau, the remainder of the Palatinate Plock, and a small portion of Masovia, from the right bank of the Narew to Pultusk. If circumstances allowed, Tauenzien was to try and procure a similar principality for the Duke of Nassau-Siegen.

In regard to the mode of his proceeding, the ambassador was instructed to observe the deepest silence, and by all means to wait and see what overtures Russia would make, and then develope the principles of his instructions in his answers.

Tauenzien, who arrived in St. Petersburg on the 19th of August, met at first with a very friendly reception, and for a moment indulged the hope of defeating the Austrian influence without much trouble. This was the time in which the King began the siege of Warsaw, and when nothing seemed more probable than the rapid and complete success of his arms. But the more complicated the military movements of Prussia in Poland became, the cooler became the air of the Russian Court to Tauenzien. "I am astounded," he wrote at the beginning of September, "at the indifference

with which, in the present position of affairs, its relations with Prussia are regarded by this Government; the Austrian scheme has already struck deep root; and I have not been able to obtain any kind of declaration respecting Poland from the Russian Ministers." Soon afterwards news arrived of the retreat of the Prussians from Warsaw. At the next audience the Empress appeared with a smiling face; no one could have supposed that she had heard anything unfavourable from the seat of war. She passed by Tauenzien without vouchsafing him a single word. Markoff afterwards addressed him in a didactic tone on the necessity of greater harmony between Austria and Prussia; so that Tauenzien's blood began to boil, and he broke off the conversation with haughty politeness. A few days later, when he announced to the Vice-Chancellor Ostermann the reception of his instructions, and declared himself empowered to proceed with the negotiation, Ostermann told him of the infinite concern which the raising of the siege of Warsaw had caused the Empress, and characterized it as a mistake from a military point of view also, since the revolt in South Prussia would have been extinguished by the fall of Warsaw. Tauenzien had not much to say in reply, but laid stress on the injury which had been done by Fersen's overbearing conduct, which only embittered the tone of the conversation still more. On the whole, however, he became more and more convinced every day that the Russians thought of nothing less than a complete partition of the whole of Poland. All the Ministers, without exception, declared that to leave any portion of it in independence would only lead to new embarrassments and difficulties, which after a short time would have to be once more dealt with by the Powers amidst new complications. The Conference, they said, would be opened in a very short time.

But day after day passed and nothing was done. Tauenzien, irritated by the cold politeness of the Russians, alarmed by the restless activity of the Austrian ambassador, and

rather more excitable by nature than was desirable under such circumstances, determined at last, on the 7th of October, to break the ice by a confidential communication on his own part to Suboff. In the course of a quiet evening visit he disclosed to him the princely endowment which the King intended to bestow on the favourite; but, to his great astonishment, his words produced but little effect. Suboff expressed his deeply-felt gratitude, declared himself utterly unworthy of such a lofty position, and expressed his fears that the whole plan was impracticable. He did not see, he said—considering the intentions of the Empress—where space for such a Duchy could be found, and he also feared the opposition of Austria. "If Russia and Prussia are agreed", said Tauenzien, "the Emperor cannot support his protest." Suboff made no reply, but asked instead what Prussia claimed for herself; and when Tauenzien refused to tell him, he broke off the colloquy by asking for a few days time for consideration.

The Russians did not fail to make the best use of the impatience which Tauenzien displayed in this unsuccessful step. At their next meeting the Chancellor Ostermann directly demanded a memorial of the claims of Prussia, as a necessary preliminary to the formal conference; Tauenzien declined, in accordance with his instructions and the well grounded apprehension that Russia wanted first to hear the claims of the two German Powers, that she might play the umpire between them. In the evening he was again at Suboff's house, who declared that the plan of the Duchy, which it had been proposed to bestow on him, was utterly infeasible, and informed Tauenzien of the Empress's wish to receive confidential communications from each of the two Courts before the opening of the Conference. Tauenzien again declined, and turned the conversation to the Austrian claims. To his great vexation Suboff dwelt on the necessity of liberally rewarding Austria for her exertions against the French Revolution, pointing out at the same time that no

compensation was to be found for her anywhere but in Poland. The Prussian ambassador allowed the truth of this, but dwelt on the difference between the solid claims of Prussia, as one of the principals in the war against Poland, and the mere wishes of Austria, which had no other title to be heard than expediency arising from the relative position of the Powers to one another. Suboff made no objection to these views, but it was clear that everything depended on the question, how far this expediency would accrue to the advantage of Austria.

From this time forward not a day passed in which Tauenzien was not called upon to bring forward the Prussian claims. Suboff continued to treat him with especial personal confidence, and even Markoff inflamed the diplomatic ambition of the ambassador by broad hints that all would be well, if Prussia would but treat the Empress with entire candour. On the 21st of October, therefore, Tauenzien announced to his Government that he had no longer been able to resist the wishes of the Russians. In his proposal he had gone beyond his instructions, and had claimed, as a means of connecting Pultusk and Szamaiten, all the land on the Narew between Zakrozyn and Tykozyn, and the line of the Niemen between Grodno and Kauen—in all a territory of rather more than 28,000 square miles. Suboff, after reading these proposals, said that the extent of country claimed seemed to him rather considerable, but he, as well as Markoff and Ostermann, promised to do their best with the Empress; he added, however, that he hoped that a report which had just arisen of a negotiation of peace between Prussia and France had no foundation, as nothing would hurt Catharine so much as such a breach of treaty on the part of her royal ally. Tauenzien hastened to contradict the rumour as an utterly unfounded calumny.

Three days later, intelligence arrived of Fersen's victory, Kosciusko's capture, and Suworow's march upon Warsaw. No one could doubt what the issue would be, and the self-

sufficient pride of the Russians was freed from all necessity of concealment or restraint. Catharine made up her mind from the very first. As soon as she had received the Prussian note, she despatched a courier to Vienna, and asked the Emperor to give his ambassador, Count Cobenzl, full powers to bring matters to a definite conclusion. On the 30th, consequently, Tauenzien received the Russian answer to his note. It began with the assurance that Russia quite agreed with the remark of Prussia, that the partition of the whole of Poland could not—with any proper regard to her own interests—be any longer deferred. Having thus laid the initiation of this step at the door of Prussia—exactly in the same way as in 1793—it proceeded to speak of the wishes of Austria, and said that a settlement must be found which would exclude all fears and all jealousies. The Empress, it continued, had the opportunity of enquiring into the views of the Austrian Government, who regarded Cracow and Sendomir as indispensable bulwarks of Galicia, and would never give their consent to the Prussian plan; the Empress therefore begged Prussia to give up these two Palatinates. As for herself she only wished to preserve friendly relations with her neighbours, by a clearly drawn line of frontier. Finally, she said that she must insist on the existing limits between Prussia and Courland, as Russia in the two first Partitions had received no commercial or maritime town, and could therefore least of all allow herself to be curtailed on the sea coast.

The Empress hereby sanctioned the acquisition proposed by Tauenzien of the stripe of land on the Narew and the Niemen, and the original claim on the country west of the Pilica and the Vistula, together with Warsaw; but she rejected the Prussian claim to Cracow, Sendomir, and Szamaiten, reserving the two first of these districts for Austria, and the latter for herself. According to this arrangement Catharine was to receive rather more than 43,000 square miles, Austria about 22,000, and Prussia not much more

than 15,000. The difference between the Russian and Prussian schemes was more than 13,000 square miles and 800,000 inhabitants, of which Russia awarded about four-fifths to the Emperor Francis, and kept one-fifth for herself. In the dispute between the two German Powers, therefore, the Empress had unmistakably decided in favour of Austria. We have sufficiently observed the mistakes by which Prussia had reduced herself to this condition, and we shall soon see by what means Thugut had attained this great result.

Such treatment after the manifestation of so much friendly confidence affected Tauenzien very deeply. In the first violence of the shock, he proposed that the King should send him to Vienna, where he hoped to induce the Emperor to seek the extension of his share of Poland, not at the cost of Prussia, but at that of Russia—a plan, the infeasibility of which was only too evident, and which drew upon him a bitterly sarcastic lecture from Lucchesini. To fill up the measure of his grief the news now arrived from Berlin of the rupture of the Hague treaty, and the orders sent to Möllendorf to retreat from the Rhine. "The Empress", said Ostermann, "does not wish to decide whether England or Prussia is in the right in this disputed question, but she cannot conceive against whom, in Poland, Prussia needed an increase of her military forces." "She thinks", he continued, raising his voice, "that Prussia's renown is engaged in the French war; she thinks that Prussia ought not to show herself so dependent on English money; and she sees how right she was not to place any Russian troops at the disposal of so inharmonious a Coalition." "How brilliantly", concluded the Minister "does the conduct of Austria contrast with this; in spite of all her losses she constantly shows the most lively zeal in the French war." Markoff expressed himself still more strongly: "They have already forgotten in Prussia", cried he, "the benefits of the treaty of 1793; they wish to overlook the fact that South Prussia is a sufficient compensation, not for one, but for four or

five campaigns; they arbitrarily pass over the distinct stipulation of the treaty, in which they promised to continue the war until the French Revolution was suppressed."

The Prussian government received intelligence of these matters at the same time as that of the storming of Praga by Suworow. They saw the power of Russia developing itself in Poland with greater force than ever, and at the same time employed with open hostility in combating the claims of Prussia. The question of Ostermann—against whom Prussia was obliged to strengthen herself in Poland?—sounded like derision. At this moment, however, the King's old hatred of the Jacobins once more broke through all other considerations; no sooner had he heard of the suppression of the Polish insurrection, than he ordered Hohenlohe, in spite of all the representations of his Ministers, to march back with his 20,000 men to the Rhine. This was the last flicker of the expiring Coalition. Meyerinck's mission and the Mayence proposition had already borne fruit on every side. The Major, after some conferences with the French Secretary to the Embassy, Bacher, reported that France was ready to include the Empire in the peace with Prussia. The Landgraves of Cassel and Darmstadt, the Duke of Deux-Ponts, and the Elector of Treves, successively called on Prussia to mediate between themselves and the victorious French. The Circles of Franconia, the Upper Rhine, and Electoral Rhine, came to the resolution to ask, not the Northern Powers, but the Emperor and Prussia conjointly, to mediate between themselves and France, in which they were zealously supported by Count Hardenberg; but the Berlin Cabinet rejected their application as inadmissible, because the Emperor, as the principal belligerent Power, could not at the same time act as mediator. What was of almost more importance than these manifestations of feeling in Germany, was that the Dutch Government sent repeated requests to Berlin, that Prussia would either afford them military aid against the threatened invasion of the French, or

save them by opening negotiations for a general peace. Since the commencement of the quarrel between England and Prussia, Holland had taken the side of the latter, and had decidedly disapproved of the suspension of the subsidy. In their distress the Dutch Government had prevailed on England, at the end of October, to offer to renew the payments to Prussia, on condition that she would empower General Möllendorf to assume energetic operations against the French. It is true that the Prussian Government replied that all deliberations on the conduct of the war must he preceded by the payment of the arrears of subsidy, but Holland only became more eager in its petition that Prussia would begin to treat with France concerning peace.

In short, while Prussia met with nothing in the east but open dislike and ill-concealed opposition, she found in the west the greatest readiness to meet her views, both among victorious enemies and hard-pressed allies. It was evident that a crisis was now at its height which was of the highest importance for all succeeding ages.

In the middle of December the ministry took all these questions, which poured in upon them from every quarter, into consideration. On the 14th the Counts Haugwitz and Struensee, and the Generals Manstein, Zastrow, and Knobloch, examined the Russian note respecting Poland. The three officers agreed in thinking that the partition of Poland would be of no advantage to Prussia unless she obtained the frontier of the Vistula, the Narew, the Niemen and Wildau, demanded by Tauenzien; and that if this were not granted, and especially if Austria were to be extended to the left bank of the Vistula, a protest ought to be made against the partition, and at most a rectification of frontiers for the three Powers allowed. If the Prussian cabinet adhered to this view of the case, there was no doubt that a rupture, not only with Austria but with Russia, would be the inevitable consequence. It was impossible to see to what this might lead. Considering the tenacity and am-

bition of Catharine, whose domineering temper was more than ever inflamed by the victories of Suworow, the worst might be expected from her, even the employment of military force. Nothing was clearer than that under these circumstances the French war ought to be brought to a conclusion as quickly as possible. Whether Prussia should then proceed to extremities against the two Imperial Courts, whether, after making peace with France, she would be able and willing to enter into a contest which might possibly bring her into as dangerous a position as any in which she had been placed during the Seven years' war—this was a question for future consideration, which every one for the moment carefully evaded. For there was always a possibility that the necessity might never arise. There was still the hope that the Imperial Courts would shrink from such extremes, and from the danger of an alliance between France Prussia and Poland, and that they would acknowledge the justice of the Prussian claim as soon as Prussia had withdrawn her neck from the noose of the French war, and had all her forces at disposal for the struggle in Poland. The Ministers, therefore, resolved to maintain their claim in opposition to Russia, and with this view to open official and definitive negotiations of peace with France.

Even now they were obliged to bring special motives to bear upon the King to wrest the final sanction from him. His royal mind still shrank from friendly contact with the Parisian demagogues, and while his statesmen and generals boiled over with hatred and rage against Austria, he was still animated by the feelings of a Prince of the Empire, and regarded its great Head with traditional reverence. To combat these feelings they summoned an ally to their aid whom they would otherwise have kept far from the King with watchful jealousy—*viz.* the only surviving brother of the great Frederick, Prince Henry, at that time seventy years old. Since 1786 he had not exercised the slightest influence over the Government of his nephew, but

had lived in retirement, at his seat at Rheinsberg, and watched the progress of affairs with a keen and jaundiced eye, as is often the case with able and excitable men who are condemned to inactivity. The two great events of the last few years—the alliance with Austria, and the Partition of Poland—had called his criticism into violent activity. He regarded the war with France as a suicide of Prussia in favour of Austria, her ever malevolent rival. He had himself, twenty years before, cooperated in a partition of Poland, and he delighted in pointing out the world-wide difference between that and the one now contemplated. He was utterly wanting in the patient consistency, the cool reflection and penetration, which distinguish the practical statesman from the political *dilettante*; but he was busy, lively, and eloquent, and, unlike his royal nephew, he was a man of quick resolution who threw himself heart and soul into the matter before him, was never troubled by contending emotions, and always inclined to rapid and sudden action. He seized with the greatest ardour the long desired opportunity of once more exercising an important influence, and overwhelmed the King with an abundance of new arguments, to show that he ought to prevent the new Partition, resolutely break with the Imperial Courts, and re-establish himself on a footing of sincere friendship with the French. A new incident occurred to second his lively representations. During the last days of November, the Dutch ambassador announced that his Government had made formal proposals in London for negotiations of peace with France, and had at the same time secretly sent two plenipotentiaries—Brantsen and Repelaer—on their own part to Pichegru's head-quarters. This decided the king. On the 1st of December he ordered his former ambassador in Paris, Count Golz, to repair to Berlin, to receive more exact instructions for his negotiation with Barthélemy in Basle. "Our last despatch, then," wrote the aged minister Finkenstein to his colleagues, "made an impression; Heaven

be praised that we have at last got the iron into the fire!" Alvensleben, no less delighted at the King's decision, was only anxious for the attainment of the object; "no doubt," said he, "Golz will have a hard fight to overcome the difficulties of this affair, and the pride of the French, while he himself is hemmed in and hampered by the jealousy of Meyerinck, the imperious counsels of Möllendorf, the intrigues of General Kalkreuth, the instructions of Prince Henry, the direct orders of the King, the private letters of Bischoffswerder, the interference of Hardenberg tolerated by the King, and the official directions of the Ministry."

The instructions, drawn up in the first week of December according to a draft of Prince Henry, directed Golz above all things to convince the French of the sincerity of the sentiments of Prussia, and then, as a test of the French feeling, to propose an armistice. Prussia, he was to say, was ready to acknowledge the French Republic, and asked in return the evacuation of her provinces on the left bank of the Rhine. Prussia further demanded that the Estates of the Empire, which had sought her intervention, should be forthwith admitted to the armistice and neutrality; and the King expressed his earnest wish that a Prussian mediation between France on the one side, and Germany and Holland on the other, might grow out of this preliminary understanding. If France desired an alliance with Holland without any cession of territory, Prussia would consent to it, provided that the House of Orange retained its position; in which case the latter would, of course, adhere to the policy of France. Golz was to see whether he could obtain any terms in favour of the *Émigrés*, was to refuse all discussion of the Polish question, and to find out whether Austria was aiming at a separate peace with France, and the acquisition of Bavaria.

As this document contained for the present only the wishes of Prussia, the deliberations concerning it passed off with facility and unanimity. A short discussion between

the Ministers arose only on one paragraph, according to which Golz was to find out whether France demanded any cession of territory. Alvensleben expressed his conviction that the French would retain the left bank of the Rhine, and thought that Golz ought to be at once empowered to agree to this, as Prussia was evidently in no condition to drive them out of the conquered districts. But Finkenstein and Haugwitz, although not very hopeful on this point, thought that such deliberations would come early enough when such a painful claim had been actually made. Instead of this they directed the ambassador to remind France of her guarantee of the Treaty of Westphalia, and to call on the Republic to renew it, because a violation of the territory of the Empire would be thereby precluded.

Meanwhile the Ministers had agreed on the note to be sent to Russia, with considerably lightened hearts. With regard to the authorship of the Polish Partion, they politely restored the honour of it to the Empress, and then proceeded to a closer examination of the different claims. "Prussia," they said, "also desires a settlement which will harmoniously take all real interests into account. She feels neither envy nor jealousy towards Austria; the time when she may have done so is past; but she cannot agree to any arrangement of frontiers which would be fatal to her own State. The strongest Power ought not to receive the largest share; on the contrary, it lies in the interest of the balance of power to favour the weaker. With regard to Cracow, more especially, this city in the hands of Prussia will only be a post of defence, because it lies on the north of the mountains; but in the hands of Austria it will undoubtedly become an offensive position, by means of which Prussian Silesia would be hemmed in on every side by Imperial possessions. Prussia in this case follows the same principle as Russia, and desires a clearly drawn line of demarcation. Nature herself has drawn it on her side—in the one case by the course of the Vistula, in the other by that of the

Narew and the Niemen." "If this settlement," concluded the note, "is not to be obtained, Prussia would prefer the continuance of the arrangement of 1793, without any question at all of a new partition of Poland." Tauenzien received orders on his own part to adhere literally to the principles here laid down, and not to allow himself to be led away, as heretofore from the path prescribed to him by over-estimating his own successes, and by credulous confidence.

The King signed this document on the 28th of November. He at that time hoped great things from the concise clearness of his arguments, and from the favourable impression which Hohenlohe's return to the Rhine would make upon the Empress. But he had no notion of the nature of the ground to which his opponent had transferred the disputed question in St. Petersburg. On the same 28th of November Thugut completed in Vienna a despatch to the Austrian ambassador in St. Petersburg, in answer to the Russian application for full powers to treat definitively. He had been at work upon it for months; and by its ratification the destinies of Europe were forced into new and entirely unlooked-for paths, which were to lead our whole quarter of the globe to a future destitute of right and freedom.

Let us endeavour to realise to ourselves the attitude which the two Imperial Courts had assumed to one another since the summer.[1]

From the very first day of the Polish war, the government at Vienna had been of opinion that Austria ought to carry off a considerable portion of the Polish booty—especially Cracow, and the bordering Palatinates, Sendomir, Lublin and Chelm; in other words, that she ought to extend her Galician borders. Without any formal negotiation this had been communicated to the Russian Ambassador Rasumowsky, and the latter had always declared that his Government con-

[1] The following statements are drawn from Thugut's Correspondence with Cobenzl. Archives at Vienna.

sidered such a claim perfectly fair. Trusting to these sentiments of Russia, Thugut had ordered General Harnoncourt to march with about 15,000 men, in the beginning of July, into Sendomir and Volhynia. But he was deeply alarmed by the consent of the Russians to the Prussian occupation of Cracow, and, subsequently, by the Russian note of the 23d of July. He saw in it the desertion of Russia to the Prussian system, and under these circumstances would not allow Harnoncourt's small corps to run the risk of a hostile collision with the Prussians, and summoned it back to Galicia in the beginning of August.

Meanwhile the Russian Ministers hastened to express to Count Cobenzl their lively regret at such undeserved mistrust. They declared, in the most positive manner, that Russia adhered once for all to her friendship with Austria, but that it should remembered that Russia, too, had her difficulties, and was obliged to act with some consideration. This necessity was, indeed, apparent enough, as long as the Prussian armies played a principal and victorious part in Poland, and Thugut's fears were in the main calming down, when he heard of the raising of the siege of Warsaw, and the retreat of the Prussians. On the 11th of September he sent off instructions to Cobenzl for the important negotiation. Austria, he said, had always regretted the partitions of Poland as injurious to her interests. If such a partion was unavoidable, she must, of course, protect her owen share, that she might not be altogether thrown into the shade by perfidious Prussia. In the next place, he said, he must take his stand on the principle that the new shares should be allotted in proportion to the relative extent of territory previously possessed by the partitioning Powers, and he therefore claimed the country between the Prussian borders the Pilica, the Vistula, the Bug, Lipsk and the Russian, frontiers. A small diminuation of this share could only be allowed on the East of the Bug, in Volhynia. After dwelling on the insatiable demands of Prussia, and their utterly unjustifiable nature, he went on to observe that the

Emperor could still fairly ask for other compensation (besides these Polish lands), corresponding to the Prussian and Russian acquisitions in the second Polish partition. This might consist either in a French district—which could, however, to facilitate a fair peace, be made much smaller than had been formerly demanded—or, if this should be found impracticable, in the territory pointed out in the note of the 27th of February, viz. the Venetian Provinces. If Catharine did not think it feasible to negotiate herself with Prussia on this point, it might be arranged separately between the two Imperial courts by an exchange of autograph letters, as in the year 1782. In no case, however, must Prussia obtain a single clod of land in Poland, if she did not furnish a considerable contingent to the Head of the Empire, and place the rest of her forces under the command of an Imperial generalissimo. On the whole, the more Russia appropriated in Poland, the better pleased would the Emperor be.

Cobenzl received these communications on the 28th of September, and hastened to lay them before the Russian Ministers. The sum total of his claim amounted to about 32,000 square miles of Polish land, and the *terra firma* of Venetia, for Austria; and for Russia as much, and for Prussia as little, land as possible in Poland—nay, virtually, nothing at all for Prussia, since the king would never agree to the conditions proposed, viz. that be should sacrifice the unity and independence of his army. The mutual exasperation of feeling therefore between the two German confederates was far more intense on the side of Austria than on that of Prussia; for the latter, though she certainly would not give up Cracow and Sendomir to the Emperor, was willing to agree to the acquisition by Austria of any other Polish Province. Russia could not fail to see the advantages to be derived from the position of umpire in which the bitter feud between the German Powers had naturally placed her. Suwarow's victories had already begun; the crushing of Poland was only a question of time. Catharine's favourite plan—the conquest

of Turkey—which had been so vexatiously interrupted six months ago by Kosciusko's revolt, once more filled her mind. It was, therefore, a matter of course that she was still, in the main, on Austria's side. But she could not, like Thugut, wish to drive Prussia to extremities; and the discord between the two German Powers made it possible for her considerably to curtail the demands of Austria, to the advantage of Russia. Consequently Besborodko and Markoff communicated to Count Cobenzl, as early as the 30th September, that Austria should receive the four Southern Palatinates, Cracow, Sendomir, Lublin, and a part of Chelm, but that a complete satisfaction of her other claims in the North and East was impossible; that Praga belonged to Warsaw, and could not be refused to Prussia; that Brzesc and Volhynia—about 6,900 square miles—must go to Russia, since she regarded the Bug as her natural boundary. Cobenzl got no better consolation from Suboff, who pointed out to him, among other things, that in the parts of Volhynia claimed by Thugut lay the town of Wladimir which had once been the source of Christianity to Russia. In other respects the Russian Ministers were as obliging and confidential as possible, and promised not to open an official negotiation with Tauenzien until the Imperial Courts had come to a thorough understanding with one another, and were enabled by their harmony to crush the evil purposes of Prussia. They only kept a firm hold on Volhynia. "Take half France" said Catharine, 'take Venetia, take Turkish lands, we have no objection; but in Poland the Bug must be our frontier." Cobenzl was compelled to ask, on the 21st of October, for new instructions.

In consequence of the continued insecurity of the Polish roads, Thugut did not receive this despatch till the 10th of November, after Kosciusko had been taken prisoner, and Warsaw had fallen; and when, consequently, Russia was in every respect master of the situation in Poland. As Thugut could entertain no idea of extorting any concession from the Em-

press by an understanding with Prussia, no course was left him but submission to Catharine's will. But even under these circumstances he had good reason to be satisfied. By acceding to the treaty of the 23d of January 1793—at least as far as Russia was concerned—according to Catharine's long-cherished wish, Austria obtained her stipulated promise to render the Belgian-Bavarian Exchange possible. It is true that Austria had, for the moment, renounced the execution of this scheme, both in London and Munich; but we shall soon enough see how little Thugut had really swerved from his dislike to Belgium, and his designs on Bavaria. The old Elector, Charles Theodore, was once more under Austrian influence; he aspired, in spite of his 70 years, to the hand of an Archduchess, and was as ready as ever to resign Bavaria to the Emperor, for a handsome compensation. In the next place Russia expressed her readiness to acquire Venetia for the Emperor. In this case, too, as in that of Bavaria, an old and darling wish of the Austrian diplomacy was fulfilled. It was never forgotten in Vienna that the Italian possessions of Venice had once belonged to the Empire, and that the crown of Hungary had possessed ancient claims on the Dalmatian provinces. In more recent times Joseph II. had spoken on this subject with the Empress Catharine, and had met with a ready consent from her, because she felt grateful for his acquiescence in her Turkish plans. Nothing could be more natural, therefore, to the nephew, who was about to renew on the largest scale the uncle's friendship with Russia, than to take up again the Italian side of the great scheme of 1782. The once proud State of Venice had fallen into decrepitude and internal decay; its oligarchical government, which might at one time have vied with the Roman or the English in solidity and public spirit, had sunk in the estimation of Europe nearly to a level with the Polish Diet or the French *Émigrés*. The main point, however, was that there was no better means of rounding off the territories of Milan, the Tyrol and Illyria, than by

the acquisition of the rich Venetian provinces, the possession of which would make Austria the mistress of the Adriatic Sea, of Italy, and the Pope at Rome.

Such advantages were, indeed, by no means to be despised. But every thing depended upon this, that Catharine should not further their accomplishment merely by holding out vague hopes, but enter into binding engagements;—that she should give a firm guarantee to crush with armed hand the resistance of any third party, and especially all interference on the part of the hated and dreaded Prussia. Thugut, therefore, as early as the 13th of November, sent instructions to Count Cobenzl to come to a settlement with Russia by giving up his pretensions to Volhynia; but to demand, all the more positively, the country between the Bug and Vistula, and the other non-Polish acquisitions mentioned above. Definitive instructions followed on the 29th. In these Thugut, while he reiterates his demands, declares afresh that he wishes Russia to gain as much, and Prussia as little, as possible. Owing to the perfidy of Prussia, he said he could only reckon upon Russia for the fulfilment of his wishes. He must, therefore, ask of the latter the most binding assurances, nay a clear and positive promise, that the Empress would help Austria with all her resources to obtain her due compensation in France, Venetia, &c.; that if any third Power offered to stand in the Emperor's way, Catharine would make common cause with Austria; that she would act thus, if Prussia should proceed against the Emperor either by threats, or demonstrations or acts of hostility; and that the two Imperial Powers should mutually promise to aid each other with all their forces against Prussia, as in 1792 against the Turks. It was likewise to be wished, he said, that the obligation of Prussia to continue hostilities against the French, under an Austrian Commander-in-chief, should be plainly expressed. Prussia, he said, endeavoured to help France in every possible way; and even wished to conclude an alliance with the Republican banditti. The state of affairs, he said in conclusion, had

been continually getting worse, and unless the Emperor received efficient support from his allies, he might, in his wisdom, see himself compelled to take a resolution, in itself extremely disagreeable to him.

It was high time to put Cobenzl in a condition to bring the matter to an issue. After overpowering Poland, Catharine's impatience had increased with every day. Although always animated by the wish to come to terms with Austria, she had, as we know, since October, urged her Ministers to preliminary negotiations with Tauenzien; and was now counting the hours till the arrival of the eagerly expected courier from Vienna. Meanwhile both she and her ministers caused Count Cobenzl many a bitter hour, by their sharp criticism of Austria's attitude towards France. She had sent general Korsakoff to Belgium, whose reports on the conduct of the war in that country were full of the strangest and most inexplicable movements—retreats without battles, nay, even in the moment of victory. "Is it treachery," said Suboff, "or what other reasons can we assign?" "It is not possible," said Markoff, "for us to imperil Russian troops in your unfortunate war." "However," said Suboff taking up the word again, "you shall even now receive an auxiliary corps of Russians, as soon as ever the Polish business is settled."

In these discussions also the mind of Catharine was secretly dwelling on her Turkish schemes. Thugut had often assured her that the Emperor had no more steadfast desire than to return to the system of Joseph II.; and as he, on his part, endeavoured to attach to this policy a renewed and more express guarantee of the acquisition of Bavaria and Venetia, the Empress was determined to obtain an express recognition of her Turkish claims. In the matter itself she had no difficulty to overcome on the part of Austria, to whom she had guaranteed a share in the spoils of Turkey. But the position of the two Powers was very different in respect to the time and mode of carrying out their plans. Russia desired, above all things, to make the attack while

the war with France was still in progress; it was desirable for Austria, on the other hand, that it should be deferred till the conclusion of peace with the French. The Empress, therefore, kept this last important point completely in the background, feeling sure that at the proper moment she would be able to carry out her will.

On the 9th of December Cobenzl received the preliminary instructions of the 13th of November. Markoff immediately asked, whether the Ambassador, in case Prussia should make difficulties, would come to terms with Russia alone, since they were agreed on the main points. "Had you," he added, "insisted on carrying your point in respect to Volhynia, we should have made terms with Prussia—of such importance is a speedy settlement to us." Cobenzl declared that in case of need he should consider himself empowered to negotiate; but as definitive instructions would arrive in a very short space of time, he begged the Russian Government to wait for them. But day after day passed, and the Courier from Vienna did not make his appearance. "When will he be here?" said Catharine, "in eight years?" "If he does not come soon," said Ostermann, "we must settle with Prussia." When, therefore, Tauenzien gave notice that he had received his new instructions, Cobenzl could only restrain the impatient Russians, by opening the negotiation on the basis of the preliminary despatch; and accordingly he entered into the first official conference with Ostermann, Besborodko, and Markoff, on the 15th of December. In this he declared Austria's renunciation of Volhynia, and received in return the guarantee of the four Palatinates, with the proviso that the question respecting the tongue of land between the Bug and the Vistula should be left to further negotiations. They then agreed upon the next steps to be taken. In the first place that Tauenzien should be invited to a conference with the Russian Ministers; and that if all the energy of the Russians was insufficient to bring him to reason, a general conference should be held. In case this too should lead to

no understanding, the Russians proposed that the Imperial Courts should come to terms with one another, make a treaty for the partition of Poland, and exchange ministerial declarations respecting the other points, instead of autograph letters between the Sovereigns, as been before had proposed. Cobenzl had some scruples respecting these formalities, but took the responsibility on himself, in order to prevent any approximation between Russia and Prussia.

Such was the position of affairs when Tauenzien, on the 16th of December, began his negotiation with the Russian Ministers. Ostermann opened the proceedings by announcing that the Empress purposed to accept the offer of the Courlanders, and to unite their Duchy with the Russian Empire. Prussia had hitherto received no information on this subject. Tauenzien, therefore, expressed his surprise, and remarked that the Russo-Prussian treaty of 1792 had expressly guaranteed the existing state of things in Courland. But the Russians were prepared for this objection. Ostermann replied that this guarantee was only directed against the reform party which at that time ruled in Poland, and naturally lapsed with the fall of Poland. Nothing remained for Tauenzien but to say that he would report the matter to his Government; which, he said, would probably expect consideration for its own wishes in other respects, as a return for conceding this point. After this prelude, their common impatience led them immediately to the discussion of the main point—the contending claims of the two German Powers to Cracow and Sendomir. Tauenzien enlarged on the proposition of the last Prussian note, but met with lively opposition, and found that the Russians openly took part with Austria. Markoff was especially emphatic and violent in his opposition to the Prussian claims; and after a long dispute the sitting was adjourned without any result.

On the following day Tauenzien tried to come to an understanding with Count Cobenzl alone, but could not advance a step further. In a second conference with the

Russians on the 18th he then discussed the future line of demarcation on the Lithuanian side. The latter expressed a hope that Prussia would give up her claim to the Szamaitic district on the Wildau, as they wished to keep her at a distance from the borders of Courland, and offered her instead a small stripe of land between the Narew and the Bug. Tauenzien promised to lay the proposition before his Government, and imagined that he then perceived a change in the tone of the Russians in respect to Cracow.

This hope, however, was of no long duration. At the general conference, on the 21st, Cobenzl manifested at the very commencement a great degree of warmth and impatience. He declared that under no circumstances could or would Austria give up Cracow. The whole of Galicia, and, above all, the important salt works of Wiliczka, would be exposed if the city fell into tho hands of Prussia. Tauenzien rejoined that the city was already Prussian territory; that it was so by the right of conquest in a righteous war of defence; that it was so by the same right by which Austria had demanded the oath of homage in Valenciennes in 1793; and that the Emperor, therefore, ought to acknowledge the clear right of arms, as Prussia had done in the case referred to. "The question at that time," cried Cobenzl in reply, "was, as now, one of compensation to Austria for her war expenses, her claims to which have been acknowledged and guaranteed by Prussia in a whole series of treaties; you will not, I suppose, maintain that Lublin and Chelm are of themselves the compensation which has been promised us by Russia and Prussia!" Tauenzien replied that he should be rejoiced if this point of view were taken up by Russia; if the natural system was, once for all, to be changed in favour of Austria, and if Russia were bent on procuring an additional advantage for the Emperor, her proper course would be, not to do so at the cost of a third party, but to sacrifice a portion of her own immeasurable share of the booty. Before the Russians could meet this

unexpected turn, Cobenzl once more put himself forward with a great show of zeal. "My sovereign," he said, "acknowledges the pretensions of Russia as just and natural; the two Courts are entirely agreed with regard to them, and consider the Russian frontiers as irrevocably settled. You yourself cannot (addressing Tauenzien) seriously hold any other opinion; if you insist upon keeping possession of Cracow and Sendomir, there will evidently be nothing left for us, and Austria will be for the second time curtailed of her just rights." The Russian Ministers warmly expressed their assent, and vied with one another in declaring that Prussia must give way. Thereupon Tauenzien played his last card. He saw, he said, that no understanding could possibly be come to. He had heard that the Emperor Francis would protest against every partition by which Cracow and Sendomir were not awarded to Austria. He was empowered to announce a similar protest, unless Cracow and Sendomir remained Prussian provinces. Under such circumstances, he said in conclusion, the partition was impossible, and there was no other course than to leave Poland in the same position as she had been before the last rebellion. But Cobenzl and the Russians with one voice protested against this declaration. "That is impossible," they cried. "The three Courts," said Ostermann, "have acknowledged the partition to be necessary to their self-preservation; Prussia herself was the first to moot the question and to maintain the unavoidable necessity of the measure; Poland is dead and gone for ever, and the dead cannot at pleasure be called to life again." Cobenzl saw that his time was come. "We are agreed," he said, turning to the Russian Ministers, "on all points. Let us draw up the protocol; let us sign the treaty; if Prussia will join us, well and good, if not, we must do without her." Tauenzien rose to make an indignant protest, and the meeting broke up in open conflict.

From this moment the Prussian ambassador found him-

self deserted and alone in St. Petersburg. The Empress was indisposed and invisible. Nothing was said about a renewal of the Conference, and even at Berlin this pause was considered desirable until the result of the negotiations in Basle and Paris became clearer. When Tauenzien again addressed the Russian Vice-Chancellor on the 28th, Ostermann was polite but monosyllabic, and assumed an air of sorrowful resignation. He gave Tauenzien to understand, that Austria had for a long time doubted whether she would be satisfied with the four Palatinates. "We," he added, "cannot possibly act otherwise; we must interest ourselves for Austria; she showed herself a good friend to us in 1788, and reaped too little advantage then." Concerning the further intentions and resolutions of the Imperial Courts, Tauenzien was unable to gain any information at all.

Meanwhile, after Thugut's instructions of the 29th of November had arrived, Catharine had given orders to prepare the acts which were to be executed in concert with Austria. They were drawn up in the form of two binding declarations, which were to be exchanged between the respective Ministers of the two countries. The first of these related to the partition of Poland. According to this Russia was to receive all the country westward of a line which ran along the Bug, on the south, as far as Brzesc, then in a straight line to Grodno, and thence along the Niemen to the East Prussian borders—in all about 44,500 square miles. Austria was to receive the four Palatinates, *i. e.* the territory between the Pilica, Vistula and Bug,—somewhat more than 20,000 square miles—and Prussia the remainder—about 16,000 square miles, on condition, of course, of her acknowledging and guaranteeing the acquisitions of the two Imperial Courts. Meanwhile the latter were to keep the treaty secret, until both parties deemed that the proper time had arrived for laying it before the Government at Berlin. When Cobenzl had declared his agreement in every particular, Markoff told him that the Empress promised Austria the fulfilment of all her

other wishes, but that she looked for corresponding services in return. In reply to his rather surprised question, Cobenzl was informed that Catharine demanded Austria's accession to the treaty of the 23d of January 1793, and complete reciprocity in the obligations to be undertaken against Prussia. Thus far he had, of course, no objection to make, since all this was in accordance with the sentiments of his government and his own instructions; but, to his great astonishment, Markoff then went on to say, that Catharine demanded the renewal of the engagements of 1782 in the event of a war with the Turks, and more particularly, the erection of a Kingdom of Dacia for a Russian Prince, in return for which Austria was to receive Serbia and Bosnia. Cobenzl immediately declared that he had no powers to sign such a clause. "The Emperor," he said, "from his great friendship for the Empress, will in all probability grant this also; but why did you not speak to me about it before, that might have time to beg for instructions on this point?" Markoff calmly answered, that, to tell the honest truth, not one of the Ministers had had the slightest suspicion of it; it was the Empress's own idea, to which however, she tenaciously adhered. He hoped, be added, that Cobenzl would sign, as it was only a question of a future war with Turkey which at the present moment was further removed than ever. After considerable discussion Cobenzl made up his mind to sign, in the hope of obtaining the Emperor's sanction; and added, on his own part, to the clause respecting the accession of Austria to the treaty of 1793, an especial and emphatic mention of the Belgian-Bavarian Exchange. And thus an agreement was come to respecting the second important declaration. "Since the Empress," it began, "has declared herself ready to assist the Emperor, to the full extent of her power in obtaining the new compensations to which, after the costs and sacrifices of the present war, he has a full right, the Emperor hereby declares, that he joins in the Russo-Prussian treaty of January 23nd 1793, in so far as it con-

cerns the interests of the two Imperial Courts, the Belgian-Bavarian exchange, and the Russian acquisitions in Poland, which last he henceforward guarantees." In the next place, the secret article of the Austro-Russian treaty of alliance respecting the Ottoman Porte was now to be extended to Prussia, so that each of the two Courts bound itself to help the other with all its forces in case of an attack by Prussia. Lastly, the Emperor promised, in case of a new and joint war against the Turks, to cooperate with all his power in realising the agreement made between Catharine and Joseph II. in their autograph correspondence of the year 1782; and especially to make Moldavia, Wallachia and Bessarabia, into an independent Principality for a member of the Imperial House of Russia. The Empress then promised, on her part, that Austria should receive the Turkish provinces formerly destined for Joseph II. She further engaged to do her utmost to procure additional compensation for Austria, and consented beforehand—in case the fortune of war should not allow the Emperor to make up his losses at the expense of France—to his appropriating, to the full extent, all the lands wrongfully possessed by Venice, or acquiring some other suitable and sufficient compensation. Finally, Catharine bound herself to aid the Emperor with all her power, if Prussia should proceed to hostile demonstrations or acts of open war.

These articles were signed on the 3rd of January, 1795, by Ostermann, Besborodko, Markoff and Cobenzl, and the intelligence of this important act was despatched with all speed to Vienna. With regard to Prussia, Catharine had undertaken to answer the last Prussian note, so far as an answer was for the moment necessary. Alopeus accordingly handed in a Russian memorial to the Government at Berlin, on the 7th of January, which, indeed, contained not the slightest hint of the actual projects of the Imperial Courts, but by its rude tone and overbearing pride left no doubt of the sentiments and hopes of Russia. The Empress, it said, had

heard with the greatest astonishment the proposition of Prussia, to preserve, under certain contingencies, the existence of Poland. This was one of those wishes which might, indeed, arise in the heart, but the fulfilment of which could not be hoped for, because it was contrary to the nature of things. As a proof of the truth of this assertion, Ostermann referred to the late outbreak, which had indisputably proved the necessity of partitioning so volcanic a territory. "In the award of the different portions of territory," continued Ostermann, "we have adhered to the principle, that the existing relation of the partitioning States in respect to power, should be as far as possible preserved—the very principle which Prussia adhered to with so much severity against Austria in the last Turkish war." In a friendly tone, which barely concealed the double-edged derision, he added the remark; "we mention that case without any fear of being suspected of a revengeful recollection of Prussia's attitude on that occasion, because the whole course of the Polish Partition of 1793 has displayed to the world our zeal for the aggrandisement of Prussia." He then passed in review the claims of the different Powers, and enlarged upon the moderation and fairness of Austria. In speaking of the pretensions of Russia, his language reached the height of sublime arrogance. He no longer took the trouble to discuss which of the two German Powers was the originator of the Polish partitions; on the contrary, the very opposite view of the case was now advanced, and made the foundation of Russia's claim to the lion's share of the booty. "We may boldly affirm," said Ostermann, "that the title of the Empress to her portion of Poland is not the work of a moment, or of chance, but the creation of thirty years of labours, cares, and colossal efforts of every kind; we may affirm that in comparison with these, Austria and Prussia have received as an unbought gift all the advantages which they have reaped, and will reap, in Poland." It was not possible in six lines to pourtray the

whole policy of Catharine with greater force, or to reveal with more brutal candour the fate which awaited Poland. To this review of the past, Ostermann added, in conclusion, some good advice for the future. Prussia should consider, he said, that by ready assent and compliance she would strengthen her alliance with Russia, and thereby obtain greater advantages than by insisting, as hitherto, upon convenient frontiers. Such a course on the part of Prussia would not have the least influence on the general condition of Europe; while those chimerical hopes of peace with France, of which so much had been said of late, could have no result at all.

It was easy to gather from this note that Russia was closely allied with Austria in every question—that she entertained a lively remembrance of Prussia's interference in the last Turkish war—that both Courts condemned the Prussian claims in Poland, and intended to carry out their will, even in case of a peace between Prussia and France. Under these circumstances it must have appeared to the Court of Berlin almost like an irony of fate, that, after a lengthy discussion of the proposition of the Elector of Mayence, the Diet at Ratisbon expressed by a large majority its desire of peace; and, on the 22nd, called on the Emperor and the King of Prussia to combine for the furtherance of this blessed work. The more evident the policy of the Imperial Courts became, the more pressing became the necessity to Prussia of seeking peace with France, but also the clearer the impossibility of making it in concert with Austria.

BOOK XI.

TREATY OF BASLE.

CHAPTER I.

FALL OF THE JACOBINS.

Impression made on Paris by the 9th of Thermidor.—State of parties in the Convention.—Revocation of several edicts issued during the reign of terror.—Effect produced thereby on the country.—Attitude of the people.—The Thermidorians.—Lecointre's impeachment of former government rejected.—Trial of the Nantes prisoners.—La jeunesse dorée.—Legendre's impeachment of former government.—Trial of the revolutionary committee of Nantes.—Law respecting the clubs.—Proposal to reinstate the 73 incarcerated deputies.—Proceedings against Carrier.—Prosecution of the Jacobins, and closing of their club.—Impeachment of Carrier.—Amnesty granted to La Vendée.—Recall of the 73 deputies.—Impeachment of Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, Barère, Vadier.

The European Powers vied with one another in seeking peace with the French Republic. We have in the first place to observe the position of affairs in France since the fall of Robespierre.

The 9th of Thermidor was a day of rejoicing for Paris, and for every part of the country to which the news was carried. The late system of government was so completely incorporated in Robespierre, all the authorities—the Revolutionary Committees, the Revolutionary Tribunals, the local Magistracies and the Popular unions—had all united themselves so closely with the Dictator, that his fall shook the fabric of the State to its very foundations. In Paris no one for a long time could give credit to such an apparently

impossible occurrence. In the prisons the accused had been robbed of all their goods and money as late as the 8th, so that they looked with mortal anxiety to a repetition of the general massacre of 1792; and even on the 9th, in the very tumult of the insurrection, Henriot had caused a transport of 80 prisoners to be dragged to the scaffold. The intelligence of the saving catastrophe, therefore, spread from mouth to mouth, as an utterly unlooked-for piece of good fortune. Men found themselves suddenly relieved from the weight of a crushing oppression; they could once more breathe freely, and look forward to the possibility of a human existence. They were still surrounded, indeed, by danger and misery of every kind; the blood so lately shed was still smoking in the streets, and all the laws and regulations of an unexampled tyranny were still in force; but the minds of the people, once more inspired by hope, rose triumphant above all their sufferings, and swelled with the intoxication of unwonted joy. During the whole of the 10th and the succeeding night, the streets were filled with surging and shouting masses of people. The sittings of the Revolutionary Tribunal had been interrupted, the Jacobin Club closed, and the Municipal Councillors had perished under the guillotine; for the moment all the tools of the old tyranny appeared to have been destroyed. The Dantonists were especially active in following up the victory in accordance with the public feeling. Because, in November, they had counselled clemency and humanity, Robespierre had kept them for more than half a year in constant fear of death; they could now prove that Camille Desmoulins had really sacrificed his life in the cause of mercy; and Legendre, Merlin de Thionville, Tallien and Fréron, were indefatigable in visiting the prisons, and dismissing by hundreds, without examination, those who had, without examination, been incarcerated by hundreds. There was a time when none of these men were a whit behind Robespierre in arbitrary cruelty; but now, with equal caprice, they gave free course to more generous

impulses. They had all their lives lived only for the present hour, and to float onwards with the wave of popular opinion had always appeared to them to be the essence of political rectitude.

In the Convention, meanwhile, very different sentiments prevailed. There the men of the Committee of Public Safety, Collot, Billaud, Carnot, Barère, and all those members of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* and the Mountain who held with them, regarded themselves as the proper creators of the new epoch. They were the remains, or at any rate the old allies, of the Hebertist party, the truest representatives of the system of terror, who had fallen out with Robespierre simply from reasons of personal ambition. They looked on the 9th of Thermidor entirely as a day of defence—not as the beginning of a new system, but as the preservation of the former one; they had struggled to overthrow the dictatorship of Robespierre, and maintain the undisturbed existence of the Revolution, for their own advantage. They looked with astonishment and indignation on the movement which was taking place about them. Billaud-Varennes opposed the suspension of the Revolutionary Tribunal with surprise and anger; when it was reconstituted with new members, Barère proposed Fouquier Tinville as Public Informer, and was extremely surprised on being met by a storm of opposition, and hearing a vote of deposition and impeachment passed against Fouquier. Immediately afterwards the avenging justice of the Convention was directed against another friend and servant of Robespierre, viz. Lebon, the dreaded Proconsul of the Department du Nord, whose provisional arrest was ordered without any opposition. The same fate befel several subordinate tools of the dreaded rulers; but, on the other hand, a proposal to indict Maignet, the executioner of Bedouin, was for the present negatived. The prevalent sentiments of the Convention were soon marked out by clearer outlines. The Moderate party, the Centre,

and the remnant of the Right, accustomed during the whole preceding year to silence and endurance, fell once more into their usual attitude, and the real power was still entirely in the hands of the Mountain. But even with the latter the views of Barère and Billaud-Varennes found no favour. The most zealous Montagnards were of opinion that for the future the government should be exercised, not by the Committees, but by the Convention as a body, and that the latter must once for all be secured against the tyranny of the former. On the 11th of Thermidor, therefore, they ordered new elections and a discussion on an entirely new organisation of the government. The new members of the Committee of Public Safety were—besides two Jacobins *pur sang*, Laloi and Echasseriaux—the two Dantonists, Thuriot and Tallien, and two members of the first Committee of Public Safety (April, 1793) Bréard and Treilhard. The leading idea among them, probably, was that the Convention should remedy the most crying abuses of tyranny, but by no means abandon the principles of the late system. They wished to ged rid of the bloodhounds and butchers of Robespierre's train, but had no intention of limiting the omnipotence of the Revolutionary government by any legal order. The Revolutionary Tribunal, therefore, was retained, and filled with new members; it was empowered to exercise jurisdiction in accordance with all the decrees of the Reign of Terror, with the exception of those of the 22nd of Prairial. The only mitigation was a provision, carried by Bourdon de l'Oise, that no sentence should be passed unless a treacherous or counter-revolutionary intention could be proved. The Jacobin Club, too, was reopened in the early part of August. It was, indeed, to undergo a fresh purgation, and all the admirers of Robespierre were to be excluded; but the "friends and brothers" were not too particular in their dealings with one another, and accepted every associate who gave an assurance that he had taken no part in Robespierre's revolt

in the night of the 9th of Thermidor.[1] The Club was, therefore, soon enabled to continue its sittings in the usual manner; once more its orators directed their thunders against the aristocrats, the egoists and the wealthy, and exhorted the Convention to suppress the craven Moderates by continued revolutionary energy.

But the tide of affairs could no longer be controlled. Ever since April the Revolutionary Government had received its organs from the hands of Robespierre; every measure which the new rulers directed against Robespierre's partisans necessarily paralysed some portion of the machine of the State. A new organisation of the Parisian National guard was indispensable. Henriot, as its commander, had—on the 31st of May and the 9th of Thermidor—threatened the very existence of the Convention, and it was now resolved to abolish the dangerous dignity, and to appoint the general and his staff, every five days, from among the District commanders. By this measure it was, indeed, rendered impossible for any party suddenly to possess itself of the armed force of Paris; but at the same time the Convention was deprived of that predominant military influence over the whole of the National Guard, which it had hitherto possessed. On the 13th of August, after protracted discussions, the reorganisation of the Government committees was completed. Hitherto all the functions of government had culminated in the Committee of Public Safety, which was virtually permanent; but now the regulation was once more enforced, that at the beginning of every month three members should retire in rotation, who could only be re-elected after the lapse of a month. It was further ordained that the Convention as a body was the only centre of government, and that

[1] Dubais C. N. 4th October. This purgation was only an empty show. Ardouin, *Jacobins 7. Vend.* "At first the Aristocrats took the *Epuration* in hand, but the Club soon put down the *Messieurs*, who wanted to admit only *honnêtes gens.*"

the Executive authority for the despatch of business should be divided among sixteen committees; one of "Public Safety," for Diplomacy and War; one of "*Sûreté générale*," for Police; one "of Legislation," for Home Administration and Legal Jurisdiction; thirteen others for Finance, Post, Army and Navy, &c. &c. It is evident that by this system the main object—the prevention of any kind of dictatorship—was fully attained; but it is no less clear that an Assembly of more than 600 members was utterly unfit to conduct the affairs of the State with unity and consistency. The different Committees took their own separate course, mutually crossing each other's path, and impeding each other's action, and frequently serving contending party objects. In the Convention itself the new organisation obliged a far greater number of members to take part in the public business, which of itself increased the influence of moderate views and personal mediocrity; but as a whole the Government necessarily lost in unity, consistency and efficiency.

Five days later the Convention saw itself compelled to take another step, the consequences of which seemed no less important. Of all the organs of the Government during the Reign of Terror, none, as we have seen, were more active or more terrible than the Revolutionary Committees. They everywhere stood in the closest connection with the Clubs, and since the beginning of the year it had been one of Robespierre's chief cares to fill them with persons on whom he could rely, and to invest them with absolute power over the freedom of their fellow citizens. It would have been absurd in the conquerors of Robespierre to leave half a million deadly enemies in possession of the power they had hitherto enjoyed. On the 18th of August, therefore, the Convention ordered that for the future only one Revolutionary Committee should exist in each district, and in Paris only 12, instead of 48; that the Conventional commissioners or the *Comité de Sûreté générale* should nominate

their members, and that the latter should only cite and imprison according to the fixed forms of law.

Another regulation which dated from the Reign of Terror was abolished on the 21st of August. Bourdon de l'Oise proposed the repeal of the law, according to which every citizen who attended a sectional meeting received 40 sous. Danton had introduced the practice in order to enable the democratic workmen to attend the meetings regularly; Cambon now reported, that in the last few months there had never been more than 300 citizens present in any of the Parisian sections, but that the daily pay of double or triple that number had been charged in the accounts. He moreover expressed his opinion that such frequent meetings only fostered disorders, and proposed that in future they should only be held on the *Decades*, or Sundays of the Republican Calendar. The Convention passed both these motions *nem. con.*

Lastly, the Government found itself obliged to pursue the same course with respect to the Communal authorities and the Popular associations, as to the Revolutionary committees and Sectional assemblies. In all the Departments the members of these bodies had zealously attached themselves to Robespierre; the agents of the Committee of Public Safety had chosen them exclusively from among the partisans of the system which had now fallen. A comprehensive change, therefore, in these quarters also was a matter of vital importance to the new rulers. Accordingly the Conventional commissioners were instructed to subject the office-bearers and members of the Clubs and Communal councils to a searching examination and purgation; and that this might really be done in the manner intended, a great proportion of the Representatives who had been sent into the provinces were recalled, and replaced by adherents of the new *régime*.

It was by these measures that the country was first made aware of the full importance of the 9th of Thermidor. The

more closely the ranks of all who called themselves Democrats or Jacobins had rallied round Robespierre's banner during the last few months, the more complete was the overthrow of the whole party. The Conventional commissioners, whatever their inclinations might be, had no choice; if the disciples of Robespierre were not to bear the sway in the Municipalities, Clubs, and Revolutionary committees, they must summon the Constitutionalists, the men of property and moderate views—in other words, the hitherto oppressed middle class—to their aid. The prisons, therefore, were everywhere thrown open; thousands of persecuted and tormented captives returned to their dwellings, and only too frequently saw themselves placed at once in possession of political power. In their homes they found, for the most part, nothing but the greatest disorder and desolation. There were few families who had not to deplore the execution of one or more of their members; the Revolutionary committees had sequestrated their houses and property, and then, in innumerable cases, had themselves broken the seals; their money-chests were rifled and their furniture carried off. And thus wealthy and respectable families found themselves at once plundered, dishonoured, and bereaved, without the shadow of a crime being charged against them. The general indignation knew no bounds, and the cry for reparation and vengeance was raised by millions from one end of the country to the other. In every quarter the club-men, before whom the citizens had hitherto trembled, were now arrested by the hand of the avengers; the criminal charges brought against them of theft and robbery, of rape and embezzlement, increased to a frightful mass; "everywhere," groaned the Jacobins in Paris with impotent fury, "the patriots are persecuted; everywhere the Aristocracy once more raises its filthy head." But in the capital, too, the position of affairs had been changed by the late decrees. In the Sectional assemblies the citizens once more took the lead; the last remnant of Henriot's bands—the *tape-durs*—disappeared from

the National guard; the young men of the upper classes assembled in the public houses for the purpose of making demonstrations against the Jacobins; and hardly a day passed without some bloody conflict in the Palais Royal between the contending parties. The Sections continually thronged the bar of the Convention with revengeful complaints against the late Revolutionary committees; they demanded, to the lively displeasure of the Convention, that the officials should be once more elected by the people; they called for free commercial intercourse at home, and peace with the Powers of Europe. Nothing contributed more largely to increase the ferment than the press, which since Thermidor had recovered its liberty. The Reign of Terror had not indeed meddled with the law by which the press enjoyed unlimited freedom, but had been contented with sending the obnoxious writers, in each particular case, to the guillotine. And now that men could no longer be beheaded at pleasure, the press was subjected to no kind of restraint, and the whole weight of this weapon was directed against the Jacobins, with a more persevering vindictiveness and unbridled fury, than against the monarchy itself, three years before. For the present, indeed, both journals and Sections professed the greatest devotion towards the Convention, since the latter, too, was for the moment at feud with the universally detested party. But in reality no one felt any confidence in that assembly; on the contrary, the citizens despised the majority of the Deputies, who had readily participated in all the atrocities of the Reign of Terror, and longed for the arrival of a new era, in which, under the control of rational laws, the fate of the country might be intrusted to enlightened and honourable men.

And thus the Government was weak in its organisation, weak from the want of any recognised principles, weak from the loss of its former associates, and the contempt of its present allies. It felt its way, undecided and without

any definite aims, over a region which was heaving with every passion of the human heart. In such a position of affairs, the momentary harmony between the parties which had conquered on the 9th of Thermidor could not be of any long duration. In the new Committee of Public Safety the Hebertists Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, and the Dantonists Thuriot and Tallien, sat side by side; the venomous feud between the two factions had for the moment been thrown into the back ground by the common dangers of Thermidor; but it soon broke forth with redoubled fury when the crisis was past. At the same time the old members of the Committee found themselves cramped by the jealousy against their former power which prevailed through the whole Convention, and the new members saw more clearly every day the direction of the popular current, and the means by which the favour of the excited multitude was to be obtained. Individuals among the Dantonists had, moreover, their own private reasons, which prompted them to break with the members of the former Committee. Fréron had been on terms of the most enthusiastic friendship with Camille and Lucile Desmoulins, and had sworn a bloody vengeance against the Hebertists of the Committee for the death of his friends. He now associated himself with some of the Moderate party, to undertake the conduct of the struggle against the late rulers, in the press. Their paper, "*l'Orateur du Peuple*," argued with daily increasing heat against everything which had any connection with the policy of the preceding year. During his mission to Bordeaux, Tallien had become acquainted with Theresa Cabarrus, the daughter of a rich banker, who was at that time separated from her first husband, M. de Fontenoy, a member of one of the *Parlements* (old *Cours souveraines*). She was young and beautiful, and yielded without any great reluctance to the wishes of the all-powerful deputy. Her influence caused a rapid change in his conduct; she awakened in him the first sparks of humanity and good sense; so that the Jacobins

of Bordeaux were thrown into a state of great excitement by the sudden clemency of the Representative towards Federalists and Capitalists. Robespierre in great displeasure recalled his metamorphosed colleague, and had Madame de Fontenoy, who accompanied him, arrested soon after her arrival in Paris. No one owed deliverance more entirely to the catastrophe of the 9th Thermidor than she; and if she had already worked on the feelings of Tallien in the interests of humanity she now redoubled her efforts to separate him entirely from the Terrorists. The Jacobins pursued her with venomous hatred and vulgar abuse; but the citizens, hundreds of whom owed their escape from prison and the scaffold to her intercession, called her "*Notre Dame de Thermidor.*" She was good-natured and lively, but of no commanding talent, and by no means over-strict in her morals. That a woman of this sort could play a political part was another sign of the sad condition to which Robespierre had degraded French society.

The contest which the Dantonists, or, as they now called themselves, the Thermidorians, intended to raise, was shown by their daily skirmishes with their opponents. When Louchet, on the 19th of August, complained that the aristocrats were once more raising their heads, and demanded the renewal of Terrorism, he was answered by the cry of many voices, "not terror but justice!" Another Montagnard named Charlier came to his aid, crying, "justice for patriots, terror for the aristocrats." "No," shouted his opponents, "justice for every one." "We demand," said Tallien, "strict justice against all the enemies of the country, but no distinction between citizens except that between good and bad; we demand the freedom of the press to protect the Republic—the freedom of the press to crush the rascals—freedom of the press or death!" On the 26th a member proposed that the members of the municipalities and the administrators of Departments should be chosen by the people. The storm then broke out on all sides: "is this a time for elections,"

cried the Mountain, "when the hydra of aristocracy is raising its insolent head in the Sections?" The Jacobins on the same evening denounced the motion as open treachery, promised to oppose it in all the Sections, and sent a numerous deputation on the 24th to the Convention, to ask for a list of the names of all the liberated prisoners, and to warn the Assembly against any act which might weaken the Revolutionary Government. Merlin of Thionville, by no means the least zealous of the Thermidorians, happened to be president on that day. He answered the Jacobins by a sharp exhortation under all circumstances to obey the law; and some of his party, Bentabolle and Lecointre of Versailles, shouted after the retiring deputation that they were intriguers and Robespierrists, on whom the Government was keeping its eye. Lecointre, an irritable, honest, but unsteady man, became more and more excited at every repetition of these scenes. In the course of the sitting, the Left once more succeeded in shelving the complaints which were sent from Vaucluse of Maignet's barbarity. On the following day they referred a motion of Fréron, for a legal declaration of the unlimited freedom of the press, to the Committees, who were instructed to give a more detailed report on the punishment of its abuses. Lecointre's patience was now exhausted; without listening to the warnings of his more prudent friends, he resolved to take the bull by the horns, and on the 28th gave notice of a formal impeachment against seven members of the old Committees. Tallien had dissuaded him from this step, but when once the struggle had commenced his party did not refuse its aid. Tallien ascended the rostra immediately after Lecointre, and described at length the nature and mission of a revolutionary Government; and though he brought forward no definite motion, it was evident that he intended sharply to criticize the conduct of the late Government, and to lay down a comprehensive programme of a new political system. The

Thermidorians thus proclaimed as openly as possible their separation from the Mountain.

The other factions of the Left closed their ranks more firmly, and were ready on the following day to receive Lecointre's impeachment. Amidst the breathless suspense of the Assembly he brought forward his motion, which contained 26 charges against Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes and Barère of the Committee of Public Safety, and against Vouland, Vadier, Amar and David of the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, on the ground of their participation in the outrages of Robespierre, and all the crimes of the Reign of Terror. There was not a man in the Convention, or in the whole of France, who could for a moment question the truth and notoriety of these charges. Nevertheless, the question thus put to the Convention was extremely critical and painful. Were they once more to sanction these atrocities by a solemn lie, in the face of the boiling anger of the nation?—or were they to denounce them as crimes, and then perhaps to fall under the weight of their own complicity? Goujon, a younger member of the Mountain, vehemently exclaimed: "What the Committee of Public Safety has done, the whole Convention, which so long endured Robespierre's tyranny, must answer for;" he demanded that, for the safety of their common country, the debate should be immediately broken off. The feelings of the majority were evidently on his side; on observing which the accused saw their advantage, and energetically demanded that the discussions should be continued and their innocence confirmed. A tumult was raised which lasted for a long time; Vadier displayed a pistol on the rostra, with which he said he would shoot himself if he did not obtain a hearing. At last the president, Thuriot, succeeded in a moment of exhaustion in carrying "the order of the day," on the ground that the accused members had always acted according to the wishes of the people. But the Mountain was not to be so easily satisfied. They had observed the hesitation of their opponents

and the apprehensions of the Centre; and they surprised the Convention, on the 29th, by proposing that the discussion should be re-opened, and a hearing given to Lecointre's proofs. A disgusting scene then followed. Lecointre, evidently unprepared, had no documents to bring forward; amidst a noisy tumult, and increasing derision, the 26 charges were once more read out, and a vote then passed that the Convention rejected the impeachment as calumnious.

The Mountain had thus obtained a complete victory in the Convention. But the public feeling in Paris was so unequivocally expressed, and all the reports from the Departments so identical in their tone, that Billaud-Varennes and his associates themselves acknowledged that their position was untenable, and voluntarily retired from the Committee of Public Safety on the 1st of September. Tallien considered it expedient to follow their example, and Lecointre, who was violently attacked by the Left, resigned his office of secretary. The Jacobins, however, were not deterred by this from formally ejecting him, together with Tallien, and Fréron, from their club. In the Convention too, the influence of the Left predominated for several days; the vacancies in the Committee of Public Safety were filled up with strict Montagnards; a furious address of the Jacobin Club at Dijon was received with evident favour, a motion for the abolition of the *maximum* was shelved, and the penal enactments against the *Émigrés* renewed in all their barbarity.

But these triumphs, were of short duration. A storm was already collecting in Paris, the bursting of which was to effect a thorough change in the relative position of parties.

The Revolutionary Committee of Nantes, under the presidency of Carrier, had, as we have seen, pitilessly butchered many thousands of the captive Vendéans on the spot; but on one occasion they had sent a transport of 132 prisoners to be tried by the Parisian revolutionary tribunal. The

trial had been delayed, and did not begin till the end of August, by which time the tribunal had been filled with new members, and the spirit of the Government, as well as public opinion, had undergone an entire change. In consequence of the suppression of all intercourse with, and all intelligence from, La Vendée, nothing more was known in Paris than that a desperate war had been carried on in that province, without mercy on either side. Now, however, the above-mentioned judicial examination of the accused brought before the public eye a series of nameless brutalities, in fresh and lively colours, with full details of the murder of children, the violation of women, the repeated drownings *en masse*, the horrors of the pest-stricken dungeons, and the brutal orgies of the executioners. The judgment-hall was crowded by an ever increasing audience, who listened to these details with breathless and shuddering horror. Throughout the vast city men were continually asking one another whether atrocities of this kind were really possible, and louder and louder rose the cry of thousands upon thousands for annihilating vengeance on the assassins. The Jacobins became uneasy beneath the weight of public indignation. From the Departments, too, the intelligence was unfavourable to them; the clubs of Sedan and St. Omer broke off their connection with them; in Caen the people celebrated the memory of the murdered Girondists, and in the department of the Aisne the most notorious Jacobins were arrested as cut-purses. The exasperation of the Jacobin Club increased with the danger: "It is well," cried the deputy Duhem, "that the toads of the marsh raise their heads, for we can more easily cut them off;" and the club caused one of its members to be incarcerated for undertaking the defence of the Nantese before the court. The Jacobins were prepared to take upon themselves the whole burden of the odium which rested on the Committee of Nantes.

While affairs were in this state, it happened, on the

evening of the 10th of September, that Tallien was seized, as he was entering his house, by an unknown individual, who shot him in the shoulder, with the words: "Wretch, I have long expected thee!" and then escaped under cover of the night. No trace of him could be found, and the crime remained unpunished. But the Thermidorians made the best use of the occurrence as a weapon of offence against the Jacobins in the Convention. Merlin of Thionville, in words of thunder, enumerated all the murderous and rebellious threats of the club; every sentence of his oration was received with shouts of applause from the Centre and the galleries. But when he proceeded to say, that even if they did not exactly close the club, no Deputy ought to set foot in that "den of murderers," and when the Mountain interrupted him with furious cries, then, for the first time since Thermidor, Durand-Maillaine rose from the Centre, and declared that the system of united clubs was a standing peril to all government whatsoever. The result was a decree that the Committee of Public Safety should draw up a comprehensive report on the condition of the country.

On the same evening, at the meeting of the club, the Jacobins showed evident marks of discouragement and apprehension. It was clear to them that they would lose their majority in the Convention, if the Centre threw off its reserve, as it had done on that day. It was in vain that Collot d'Herbois strove, on the 11th, to make a diversion in their favour; his motion for recapturing the liberated aristocrats met with no support. Meaulle had no better success when he demanded that the patriots should be set free, who, he said, were being tried on trumped-up charges of vulgar crimes. Merlin cut short the discussion, by asking whether the Convention was going to take thieves and forgers out of the hands of justice? On the 14th the trial of the Nantese was terminated; the Revolutionary tribunal decided that they were all innocent victims of a horrible tyranny, and appended to their aquittal an order for the

immediate impeachment of their persecutors—the members of the Revolutionary Tribunal of Nantes. The Parisians celebrated the day on which this decision was pronounced by renewed attacks upon the Jacobins, who could no longer show their faces in the Palais Royal, nay, scarcely in the streets, without rousing the anger of the youthful citizens. The latter now began to organise themselves in a regular manner for these street contests; they wore grey coats with black collars, high cravats, and crape on the arm, in memory of the executions of the Reign of Terror. Their weapon was at first a heavy walking-stick, but Tallien and Fréron took the matter in hand, armed their *Jeunesse dorée* with swords and guns, and gave them a military training. In the present clogged state of the Government machinery, there was absolutely no means of preserving peace in the streets, and in the main the contending parties were left to take their own course. It was in vain that Robert Lindet, the least obnoxious member of the old Committee of Public Safety, brought up the report, on the 20th, on the condition of the country; in which, while artfully confessing, in deference to public opinion, the sad state of domestic affairs, he held out a prospect of reforms, and exhorted the citizens to forget the past, and not, through a desire of vengeance, to inflict new wounds on their common country. He spoke the language of cool political wisdom, which could not but appear to the millions of abused, plundered, and insulted victims, as impudent derision. How, it was asked, could they talk of amnesty, at a time when not the slightest guarantee existed against the return of the evils complained of; at a time when Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois were still sitting in the Convention; when Maignet still continued to rage in Avignon, and the Jacobins were still incessantly demanding, by deputations and addresses, the recapture of the prisoners lately liberated? At the same sitting in which Lindet dealt out his cheap exhortations to unity, the Convention had received a deputation from Lyons,

which described, in simple and touching words, the fearful position of the city. In this case, too, a number of common thefts were brought before the Assembly side by side with political prosecutions, and the Convention ordered the Committees to bring up a report on the state of Lyons within three days. While this affair presented a picture of the old sins of the Reign of Terror, an example was given on the following day of the present machinations of the Jacobins. The Conventional commissioners, Serre and Auguis, reported from Marseilles that the club in that city was meditating new prison-massacres, and preparing for an open revolt against the commissioners. News arrived a few days afterwards, that the rebellion had broken out, that the lives of the commissioners had been threatened, and that peace had only been restored by the interference of the troops of the line. The question of the war in La Vendée was then discussed—the horrid deeds of the "Hellish Columns," and the barbarity of generals Turreau, Huchet and Grignon. The facts brought forward were, it is true, the same which in Robespierre's time had received the submissive approval of the Convention; but now they called forth unanimous cries of indignation, and a vote of impeachment against those generals was passed unanimously. Meanwhile new reports arrived of the uncontrollable disobedience of the clubs: the club at Marseilles had placed another battalion at the disposal of their Parisian brethren; another club abused the Conventional commissioners for appointing officials without their co-operation; and a third declared that the clubs were the only true organs of the people's sovereignty. The Parisian Jacobins, as usual, took the lead; they bestirred themselves in the different Sections, created disturbances of every kind when the citizens deliberated on an address of devotion to the Convention; accused all their opponents of royalism in abusive speeches, and threatened them with speedy destruction. The Convention itself was induced by these tumultuous proceedings to rebuke the offenders, to

issue orders for their arrest, and to make various political regulations; and the feelings of the citizens at large were more and more exasperated against these incorrigible rioters.

The Thermidorians considered that the time was now come for a new attempt against the chiefs of the hostile party. On the 3rd of October, Legendre once more preferred a criminal indictment against Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois and Barère. Cambon endeavoured to defend Barère, who had been his colleague in the first Committee of Public Safety, by saying that he could not possibly be an accomplice of Robespierre, since, shortly before the 31st of May, he had drawn up articles of impeachment against Robespierre, Danton and Pâche. But Clauzel destroyed the effect of this reference to past and doubtful merits. "Did not Billaud-Varennes and Barère," he asked, "support the law of the 22nd of Prairial? Did not the greatest number of victims fall by their hands, in the last weeks which preceded Robespierre's fall? Did not Billaud endeavour to prolong the *permanence* of the Committee of Public Safety, and did not Barère wish to retain Fouquier Tinville as public accuser?" Collot d'Herbois met the charges against him with a bold forehead and a proud composure. "Carnot, Prieur and Lindet", said he, "always agreed to the measures we took. The Committee of Public Safety, as a body, must bear the responsibility. But if we are all guilty, so is the Convention, which might any day have done what it did on the 9th of Thermidor." He thereupon explained at large the reasons which necessarily deterred the Committee from overthrowing Robespierre at an earlier period, and concluded by declaring that he was fully convinced of the honourable and patriotic motives of his accuser. The confidence and boldness of his manner had a considerable effect, and a certain hesitation was observed in the Assembly; and when Merlin of Thionville proposed that the indictment should be referred to a committee, the Mountain raised such a tumult, that Bréard at last carried a vote to return

to the "order of the day," by referring to the malicious pleasure which such quarrels in the Assembly would cause to foreigners.

The Left thus obtained another victory, but it was really nothing more than the momentary postponement of an impending danger, and by no means an essential change in the real position of affairs. On the 6th, Carnot, Lindet and Prieur, resigned their seats in the Committee of Public Safety; on the 7th, the Convention relieved the city of Lyons from the state of siege, and gave it back its former name. On the 13th, Merlin inflamed the wrath of the Assembly against the Terrorists, by producing a despatch from Nantes, according to which a general-adjutant, without law or sentence, had caused thirty-nine women, children and infants, to be drowned. A furious storm broke out. Many voices demanded the immediate proscription of the cannibal; but Merlin cried: "Not so, he must be arrested and examined respecting his still more mighty accomplices." This was agreed to, and the Revolutionary tribunal was directed to lay aside all other business, and proceed at once against the Committee of Nantes. The articles of impeachment were ready on the very next day; the discussion began immediately, and caused a new and violent upheaving of public opinion in Paris. Emboldened by this state of affairs, the Government committees ventured to take decisive measures against the powerful Club. On the 16th of October, Delmas, in their name, laid the draft of a law before the Assembly, which forbade all connection between the Popular associations, and the issuing of proclamations under a common name, and at the same time obliged them to hand in an exact list of their numbers, and to sign all petitions with the name of each petitioner. These regulations left to every citizen the right of expressing his opinion, but cut through the fearful net of corporative unions, by means of which the Jacobins had for three years tyrannized over France. An extremely warm debate on this

subject arose in the Convention. The Left violently protested against such a violation of the Rights of Man, and the eternal principles of justice and patriotism; while the Thermidorians, and above all Bourdon, pointed out that the union of clubs was a dangerous aristocracy, whose power rivalled that of the Convention. Merlin, Bentabolle, and Rewbell energetically supported him; a number of zealous Montagnards, who had hitherto preserved a neutrality between Hebertists and Dantonists, joined the majority, and the law was immediately carried without alteration. The Jacobins ground their teeth when these new trammels were laid upon them, but did not venture on any open resistance. Lejeune reproached the old heroes of the party for preserving a guilty silence in the Convention; "we have been for months," replied Billaud, "in an oppressed condition, our speeches would not have furthered but rather injured the good cause." "Yes, indeed," cried Fayau," "we are hard pressed by the aristocracy; a million of idlers are trying to rule over France, and the word 'mob' is once more heard." Bassal endeavoured to console them: "In the year 1791, too," he said, "a similar law was passed, but the club quickly burst its fetters." "It is true," he added, "that public opinion is for the present estranged from the club, and our hope lies in the future."

In the present, indeed, the flood of retribution daily threatened to overwhelm them. Every sitting of the Revolutionary tribunal revealed some nameless atrocity of the Nantese terrorists; it is even now impossible to read the account of these proceedings without horror; what then must have been their effect upon the crowded audience before whose eyes these dreadful pictures were presented in fresh and lively colours! The immense number of crimes rendered denial or palliation impossible; and from the very beginning of the trial the accused had recourse to the sole remaining means of defence—the repeated declaration that they had only been passive tools in the hands of the Conventional

commissioner, the omnipotent Carrier. They did not thereby succeed in clearing themselves, but they daily added to the load of proofs against their great accomplice. With all the despair of convicted criminals they complained of the injustice of persecuting them, the servants, while the originator of all these infamous crimes still continued to sit in the hall of legislation. They called for Carrier, and thousands from among the audience joined in the cry: "Carrier! Carrier!" The Convention was still reluctant to commence a prosecution against a Deputy; but the excitement of the people left them no choice, and on the 20th of October André Dumont brought the question before the Assembly. Tallien agreed that the Convention could not remain silent, but he demanded that the greatest precaution should be taken against the recurrence of judicial murders from political motives, and proposed the appointment of a special commission to report on the forms of procedure to be observed. This gave the Moderate party an opportunity for a popular demonstration which was productive of the most important consequences.

Mention had been made some days before of those seventy-three Deputies who, in the summer of 1793, had signed a protest against the proceedings of May the 31st, and who had on that account been imprisoned in September, and since that time frequently threatened with death. One of their party now rose in the Convention and said: "You very justly demand strict justice for Carrier—reports, proofs and public discussion; nothing is more necessary or indispensable. But the seventy-three arrested Deputies have enjoyed no such advantages; no one has examined them, no proofs of any crime have been brought against them; the report on their case which was to have been made a year ago is not yet in existence; I demand their immediate restoration to their seats in this Assembly." The majority resisted, even several of the Thermidorians showed some apprehension. "This," cried Thuriot, "is a most important

question; are we to take measures against the 31st of May—the day which lent its victorious energy to the Revolution, and saved France? The Convention in its present constitution desires the public good; let us leave it as it is; the restoration of the seventy-three might become a dangerous lever in the hands of the Reaction."

This measure might, indeed, have changed entirely the whole character of the Convention. Up to this time the contest lay between two factions of the Mountain—one of which sought the support of public opinion and the Moderate Centre, in order to wrest the government from its opponents. But by the restoration of the seventy-three, the Centre and the Right might have gained a firm and independent majority, since there were often not more than two hundred and fifty members present at the sittings. In this case the Dantonists, who up to the end of 1793 had rivalled the other factions of the Mountain in brutality, had no guarantee at all that they themselves should not suffer a retribution similar to that which they were now on the point of preparing for the Hébertists. Neither Tallien nor Merlin would consent to a disavowal of the 31st of May. They were so startled by this proposal that they would not even listen to the prayer of a Parisian Section to repeal the law respecting the *suspects*.

But the weight of public opinion, and still more the inexorable logic of facts, drove them on. On the 23d of October the Committees brought up the draft of a law on the procedure to be observed in case of complaints against a Deputy. There was no lack of protecting forms; it was provided that there should be first a declaration of the Government Committees that there was sufficient ground for an examination; it then ordained the formation of a commission of twenty-one members by lot; then an investigation of the grounds of suspicion brought forward by the Committees, without regard to any other complaints; then a report of the commissioners that there was sufficient

ground for an impeachment, after three days' discussion in the Convention, in which the delinquent was to take part; and lastly, a resolution of the Convention on the indictment, and the impeachment, of the accused before the proper tribunal, which, again, was to form its judgment only on the charges brought by the Convention, without any regard to other complaints. It was nearly a week before these numerous points were settled; Paris became more and more unruly, the Jacobins endeavoured to raise the workmen of the Faubourgs; and the Election club, a sister society of the Jacobins, presided over by a violent fanatic named Baboeuf, preached open resistance to the Convention. The Government was forced to take still more energetic measures. They dissolved the Election club, and arrested a number of the loudest bawlers; and on the 29th the Committees declared that there was sufficient reason for instituting an enquiry against Carrier. The Commission of 21 was then chosen by lot and the proceedings commenced.

There could be little doubt as to the result, unless the trial was nipped in the bud, and no one saw this so clearly as the members of the old Committee of Public Safety. The Nantese terrorists had appealed to the orders of Carrier, and Carrier himself had only carried out the commands of the Committee. The arguments brought forward to justify the condemnation of Carrier, applied with equal force to Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois. In these straits Billaud threw off his previous reserve in the Jacobin Club on the 3rd of November. One of the speakers had loudly declaimed against the monopolists, the *Jeunesse dorée*, the Talliens and the Frérons; another had complained that during the trial of Carrier no mention had been made of the crimes of the Vendéans. Whereupon Billaud-Varennes declared that the state of Paris at present was the same as at the time of the massacre in the Champs de Mars; that the lion was not yet dead, but on the contrary would awake in all his terrors and tear his enemies. "The

armies," he cried, "already stand opposed to one another, the patriots are in the trenches, the breach is laid open, and the people will rush with irresistible fury to the attack." Loud shouts from the assembly accompanied these furious words.

The main hopes of the club rested, at that time, on the melancholy condition in which the working classes found themselves at the approach of winter. The communistic legislation of the preceding autumn, which in a few months had destroyed agriculture, manufactures, and trade, now recoiled upon the heads of its authors. Previously to the events of Thermidor, the capital, and especially the proletaries, had suffered the least, because the State provisioned Paris by its requisitions, and gave the democratic mob constant means of subsistence from the pay of the Revolutionary army, the Revolutionary committees, and the Popular assemblies. These sources were now closed, and the misery of the workmen was extreme. It was with the greatest difficulty that a barely sufficient supply of corn was procured; there was a great want of fuel, and the commonest colonial wares, *e. g.* sugar, were scarcely to be met with. The law against *accaparement* and the law of the *maximum* still existed; but since those who transgressed them were no longer thrown into irons, they were kept by no one, and he who only offered *assignats* in payment was obliged either to give fabulous nominal values, or to content himself with the worst of the goods. The only effect which these laws still had was to impede trade, and thereby prevent the regular supply of food to the people. The question of a formal abolition of the *maximum* had already been mooted in the Convention; but the opposition of the Montagnards, or fear of the proletaries, had prevented the Assembly from coming to any decision. It was a favourite task with the Jacobins to represent to the starving people that the neglect of the law was the cause of all their sufferings,

since they hoped by these means to rouse the lower classes to a new contest against the *Bourgeoisie.*

The majority of the Convention was by no means blind to these dangers. On the 4th they ordered the Committees to bring up a searching report on the law of the *maximum;* and, on the 5th, Bentabolle referred to the seditious speech of Billaud-Varennes in the Jacobin Club. The Mountain immediately raised a furious tumult, but the majority did not allow themselves to be intimidated. Tallien declared that all these intrigues had but one object, to rescue the men of blood from a righteous retribution; Bourdon said that the Convention had, on a former occasion, justly raised the poorer classes against the aristocracy; but that, as in the case of a conflagration, impure elements had been mixed up with the rest—"bandits and thieves, who now bestir themselves because you wish to restore order." "The Jacobins alone," cried Legendre, "are in motion; but behind *you* stands the whole people of France in case of revolt; proceed boldly against every Member who dares to preach rebellion, and in other respects trust to your *Comité de Sûreté générale*, which will crush all factions right and left."

Day by day these scenes were repeated, in which the debate from the very beginning was nothing but strife and confusion; the whole hall resounded with expressions of wrath, and terms of personal abuse and insult were exchanged between Right and Left. To-day the Centre brought forward a motion that no Deputy should be a member of the Jacobin Club; to-morrow, a Member of the Mountain proposed that no Deputy should be allowed to write for a newspaper. From the Left loud threats were heard against every one who should raise the price of the poor man's food by meddling with the *maximum*; the Right, in reply, brought forward reports from the south respecting the shameless tyranny which the clubs of Dijon and Avignon had hitherto exercised. The discussions in the Jacobin Club were no less

tempestuous: they were furious at the unheard-of proceedings of the Revolutionary tribunal, which allowed Chouans and Vendéans to appear as witnesses against the Nantes patriots; they charged Tallien with high treason, for endeavouring to make a disgraceful peace with foreign Powers. On the 9th the Commission of Twenty-one announced that they had made up their minds respecting Carrier, and that the report could be brought up on the second day from that time. It was felt on all hands that the decisive day was approaching, and the Thermidorians resolved to get the start of their opponents by a rapid *coup de main*. In the evening the *Jeunesse dorée* were on the alert in the *cafés* of the Palais Royal, and demanded with tumultuous cries the closing of the Jacobin Club. Fréron himself was among them, and fired their courage by exciting speeches; until at last a strong column began its march to storm the club. The Jacobins assembled in great numbers, and the gallery was occupied with the usual crowd of democratic "brothers and sisters." On the approach of their enemies they barricaded the doors, endured for a time the shower of stones with which the assailants shattered the windows, and at last, led on by some Deputies of the Mountain, they endeavoured to escape by a sally. A wild hand-to-hand fight ensued in the streets, in which the Jacobins were at last defeated and driven back into their hall. The women endeavoured to save themselves by flight, but most of them were seized, and flogged amidst shouts of derision at the "furies of the guillotine"—the female disciples of Robespierre. In the midst of this tumult, police-patrols and members of the Government committees came up, and began a negotiation with the assailants; the final result of which was that an undisturbed retreat was granted to the Jacobins, during which, however, they were subjected to every kind of derision and insult. Insignificant as this occurrence was when compared with the great street battles of earlier and later times, it was sufficient to annihilate the political existence of the

once powerful club. It was fatal to its prestige that the ill-treatment it had suffered was regarded as an unimportant riot, that not a hand was raised in its defence, and that even the starving workmen only thought of their own need, and no longer of the Jacobins. How the Mountain raged when, in reply to its appeals to the Convention for vengeance, the *Comité de Sûreté générale* coolly replied that the best means of preventing similar disturbances would be to close the club! The Left summoned all the powers of their logic, their passion, and their lungs, and did in fact carry a motion for a second report to be brought up by the Committees. They had got up a deputation for the 11th from a democratic district of Paris, which, with all the phraseology of 1793, demanded the punishment of the nefarious rioters. The majority, however, in spite of all the bluster and stamping of the Left, paid them but little attention, and turned with impatience to the *ordre du jour*, which summoned the spokesman of the Twenty-one to the rostra to deliver his report. A general and breathless silence succeeded to the late tumult. The report of the commission had with great care and foresight eliminated all the delinquencies of Carrier for which his superiors might be made answerable, and then drawn up a long list of charges, concluding with a declaration from the Commission that there was, in their opinion, sufficient ground for an impeachment of Carrier. According to the rules of procedure which had been laid down, the accused was allowed to speak for himself. Carrier spoke for several hours, often in the greatest excitement, and sometimes in utter confusion; in the main he rested his case on the fact that he had only enforced the laws, carried out the wishes of the Committee and the Convention, and defended the holy cause of freedom against the fanatics of La Vendée. He could hardly expect to produce any effect, because the Convention must have considered these points before they commenced proceedings against him. In spite of the violent opposition of the

Mountain, orders were issued for the arrest of Carrier. In the same hour in which he was led to prison, the Government decided the fate of the Jacobin Club, which half a year before had so frequently encouraged Carrier's atrocities by wild applause. On the 12th the Committee of Public Safety announced to the Convention that the Government had given orders in the preceeding night to close the Jacobin Club. "They dared," said Laignelot, "to rival you; they proclaimed that 'the breach was made': they must therefore be taught that there is but one national power in the Republic." Loud and never-ending applause from the Convention and the galleries expressed the public approval of this act.

The majority justly considered this a very important advantage. The most dangerous central organ of the fallen rulers perished with this great club: and the assault on the whole body of the old Committee of Public Safety was commenced by Carrier's prosecution. Legendre once more brought forward his charges against Billaud-Varennes and his colleagues, and so strong and undisguised were the feelings of the Convention against them, that even the Left checked the furious outbursts of Billaud. While the act of impeachment against Carrier was being discussed during five sittings, the Convention continued to receive from all parts of the Republic louder and louder complaints of the sufferings which had been endured during the Reign of Terror. In the Department of Gard, Hérault, and Avignon, a number of peaceful peasants had been arrested, merchants prosecuted, and the wealthy plundered; and the blood-thirsty Revolutionary tribunal of Nismes had extended its murderous operations far and wide into the surrounding country. The name of the president, Courbis, who arbitrarily condemned the prisoners to the scaffold or the galleys, or transported them to the deadly swamps of Cayenne, was execrated throughout the southern portion of the country. The Convention heard

with angry astonishment that the bloody tribunals instituted by Couthon in Puy-de-Dôme, Cantal, and Corrèze, had continued their crimes for three months after the 9th of Thermidor, and had incarcerated all those who possessed property, solely on account of their wealth. Boundless misery had excited boundless exasperation amongst the inhabitants. In Montbrison a constitutional priest was surrounded by a numerous sect who formed a project of deserting their accursed homes, and founding a new empire in Jerusalem under the rule of Christ. Similar cases occurred in the Department of Ardèche, where the associates of Couthon had indulged their fury in the same way as in Puy-de-Dôme; the peasants, as they had done three years before, sought encouragement and consolation for the sufferings of the Revolution from non-juring priests in the recesses of the mountains. But the thirst for vengeance upon earth moved the hearts of men still more strongly than the desire of heavenly consolation. There was not a single Department in all those regions, in which the authorities did not expect from day to day a fearful explosion of popular wrath against the Jacobins. In the west of France—in La Vendée and Bretagne—the civil war had not ceased for a single hour, and though not carried on with such imposing forces as in the former year, the extent of its operations was considerably enlarged.

It was indeed quite certain that after the great victories of the Republic over the Allied armies, the Vendéan rebels could no longer hope to overthrow the government of the Convention in France. But it was just as clear, that under the present system of inexorable severity, the insurgents would continue to fight with all the courage of despair, and that the Republic would have to employ its best forces for years to come, in a miserable and barren civil war. The generals who commanded in the rebel provinces continually declared to the Committee of Public Safety that the mass of the population had no longer any political object in view, but that

they could not be put down as long as every individual amongst them was fighting for life and property; and therefore, that a comprehensive amnesty was the only effectual means of pacifying these provinces. In spite of their abhorrence of Robespierre, the present rulers could not easily consent to such an act of mercy towards the royalist rebels; but they were constrained by circumstances and public opinion, and on the 1st of December the desired amnesty was granted by the Convention. Carnot brought up the report in which the amnesty was proposed, and not a voice was raised in opposition, when he pointed out that, according to the laws existing in La Vendée, not only every armed insurgent, but every non-juring priest, every federalist, every inhabitant who had any kind of intercourse with the rebels, was under sentence of death; and that as more than two-thirds of the population fell under these categories, no end to the war could possibly be looked for. The decree, therefore, which promised full pardon to everyone who should lay down his arms within a month, was a solemn condemnation of the terrorizing policy pursued by the former government.

Under these circumstances Lecointre was no longer accused of calumny when he renewed his charges, on the 5th of December, against the members of the old Committees. A deputation from the unhappy village of Bédouin had appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and excited the greatest horror by a description of its misery. Legendre burst out with the words: "Carrier drowned men in Nantes, Lebon raged like a fury in Arras, Maignet massacred in Orange, and the Committee of Public Safety looked on in silence at all these horrors!—it is absolutely necessary to call its members to account." Lecointre then rose and announced that he was now in possession of the documentary evidence for an impeachment. Almost without any further discussion a decree was passed, in accordance with the new law, directing the three Government committees to report to the Con-

vention as speedily as possible on the case of Bédouin and all that was connected with it.

Blow after blow now fell upon the devoted heads of the defeated party. After granting an amnesty to the Vendéans, it was impossible for the Convention to reject the petition of the Seventy-three imprisoned deputies, who were charged with no other offence than the expression of a different opinion. On the 8th of December, therefore, they were restored to their seats—together with three other members who had likewise been arbitrarily excluded—amidst the joyful shouts of the Centre. The majority was thus secured to the Moderate party, and the fate of the Jacobin leaders already sealed. On the following day, however, Grégoire mooted a question of still greater import, by presenting a petition for restitution to his seat from the proscribed Girondist Lanjuinais. Lanjuinais, like Buzot and Vergniaud, had been proscribed for open resistance to the revolution of the 31st of May: if, therefore, the Convention acknowledged his innocence, it would thereby denounce the 31st of May as an illegal deed of violence, and condemn the legality of its own rule since that eventful day. The majority wavered, but no one dared to oppose the motion openly in the present state of public opinion; they therefore directed the three Committees to bring up a report within three days. While they were deliberating, parties outside were busily preparing for the coming struggle. The workmen of St. Antoine, set in motion by famine and the cold of winter, proclaimed their intention of presenting "mass-petitions." The Jacobins had summoned all the members of the old Revolutionary Committees from all the Departments to Paris, in order to be united and strong in case of an outbreak. But the *Bourgeoisie* of Paris listened with revengful ears to the last proceedings of the Nantese trial, at which Carrier still bore himself so proudly, that his confidence and contempt of death, after such overwhelming proofs of his guilt, excited alternately indignation and horror. On the 16th the Court pronounced

judgment of death against Carrier and two of his accomplices, convicted the rest of the crimes imputed to them, but acquitted them on the ground that there was no evidence of counter-revolutionary intentions. The three who were condemned were immediately led to execution, but their death was not sufficient to cool the public rage called forth by the acquittal of their associates. So great a tumult was raised in Paris on the subject, that the Convention was obliged to give orders to arrest the wretched men again, and after such a crying violation of justice, to decree that the Revolutionary Tribunal should be filled up by new members.

In the midst of this ever-varying excitement, the Committees brought up their report on the proscribed Girondists. It was a faithful reflection of the uncertain position of affairs, and the general suspense. "In accordance with the same patriotic motives," said Merlin of Douay, "which induced us to reinstate the seventy-three Deputies, the Committees recommend that the proscribed Girondists should be subject to no further prosecution, but should not be recalled into the Convention." It was an amnesty instead of a restoration; the Committee offered personal security to the victims of the 31st of May in order to obtain pardon for the memory of that dreadful day. The Right murmured and demanded a discussion. Merlin cried, "Do you wish to excite public opinion to the destruction of the whole Revolution?" "We demand for our colleagues," replied Saladin, "not mercy, but justice; if they are guilty, let them mount the scaffold; if they are innocent, they ought once more to take their seats." But the Thermidorians, who had all taken part in the 31st of May, for the most part joined the Left on this occasion. "To say a word more on this subject," cried Legendre, "would be an injury to the country." The Assembly was violently moved, the President's call to order was no longer attended to; on the Right more than a hundred voices demanded the *appel nominal;* the

Left called for the arrest of all the rioters. Amidst a violent commotion the President at last declared that the proposal of the Committees was adopted, and adjourned the sitting.

The Left thus gained a hardly earned victory, which did not long deter their enemies from fresh assaults. On the 24th a zealous Montagnard delivered a long oration on the dangers of the country, and endeavoured to shew that freedom of trade had only benefited the usurers, and freedom of the press the aristocrats. When his friends proposed that his speech should be printed, Legendre asked: "How long will the Convention allow itself to be cajoled by a few scoundrels?" The Left rose in angry tumult; one of them attacked Legendre with his stick, and a terrible din was raised throughout the whole hall. Legendre immediately explained that he only referred to the three great criminals, the members of the old Committee of Public Safety, whom he had already so frequently attacked. Collot d'Herbois wished to reply, but in spite of all the efforts of his friends to obtain him a hearing, the majority drowned his voice by repeated cries of "*l'ordre du jour!*" The same struggle was repeated at every sitting. The Right kept their eyes upon their booty, and inexorably persisted in their demand for an immediate decision. On the 25th intelligence arrived of fresh intrigues of the Jacobins in Marseilles: "Of course," said Couturier, "the criminals will never be quiet as long as their chiefs go unpunished; why do the Committees hesitate so long to bring up their report on Lecointre's charges?" On the 26th Clauzel spoke of the Jacobin agitation in Paris, and concluded with a motion that the Committees should report on Lecointre's impeachment on the very next day. "All France," cried he, "calls for the punishment of Carrier's masters." It was in vain that the latter represented that Robespierre had been their enemy, and that they had done their best to overthrow the tyrant. "We know," was the reply, "how the matter stood. Robes-

pierre wished to proscribe you, that you might not share the power with him; you helped to overthrow him, that you might possess the tyranny alone." He had scarcely ended, when the majority demanded a division, and immediately carried his motion. Duhem, one of the most active and violent of the Jacobins, rushed to the rostra. "If Clauzel," he cried, "who is a vile calumniator, does not prove his accusations, I declare that I will kill him with my own hand." These words kindled the wrath of the whole Assembly; the majority wished to drag Duhem from the rostra and send him to prison; he stood his ground, however, took off his cravat as if to prepare for a wrestling-match, and repeated his abuse. At last his opponents stopped his mouth by paying no attention to him and proceeding to the *ordre du jour*. On the 27th the Committees, in accordance with Clauzel's motion, brought up the report which had been so loudly called for: they considered that there was no reason for prosecuting Vouland, Amar and David, but that there was sufficient ground for investigating the case of Barère, Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois and Vadier. The Convention refused all further discussion and decreed the immediate formation of the Commission of Twenty-one. The accused expressed their joy that the opportunity was at last afforded them of annihilating the long list of calumnies against them, that they were no longer condemned to a silence which their enemies imputed to the consciousness of guilt.

It was exactly five months since the 9th of Thermidor. On that occasion Collot d'Herbois, as President of the Convention, had obstinately refused to give a hearing to Robespierre; he now thanked the Convention for giving him the opportunity of speaking on a charge which affected his life. Meanwhile a song had become popular in Paris among the *Jeunesse dorée*, entitled "*le Reveil du Peuple;*" and while the Jacobin factions in the Convention were con-

tending with one another in the wildest hatred, the citizens might be heard daily singing:

Quelle est cette lenteur barbare?
Hâte-toi, peuple souverain,
De rendre aux monstres du Ténare
Tous ces buveurs de sang humain!

CHAPTER II.

RESTORATION OF THE GIRONDISTS.

State of Paris, want and dissipation.—Opposition to the communistic laws.—Discussion respecting the property of those who had been executed.—Abolition of the maximum.—Longing of the people after peace.—Party of the independants.—The thermidorians.—The moderates.—War in la vendée and bretagne.—The chouans.—General hoche.—Negotiations.—Peace of la jaunais.—Arrest of billaud-varennes.—Recall of the proscribed girondists.—The jacobins prepare for an insurrection.—Lecointre proposes the adoption of the constitution of 1793.—Discussion respecting billaud-varennes and his associates.—Revolt of the 12th of germinal.—Transportation of billaud-varennes and collot-d'herbois.

During the debates on the fate of Carrier, Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, winter had completely set in in Paris, and a period began such as the capital had not seen for centuries. During a whole year not a soul in this vast city had felt secure of his life or his property for a single hour. The dread of immediately impending death had brooded over all hearts; the utter absence of all law had broken down the strength to labour and the capacity for enjoyment, and had severed all the bonds of family, neighbourhood and social intercourse. When, therefore, this fearful tyranny collapsed, it seemed as if a new life had all at once commenced. Imagine a people who have escaped from their homes before the eruption of a volcano—and who, on their return, greet the old familiar places in the midst of ruin and desolation, begin to set their house in order, to work, and to make up for their long sufferings and privations by jubilant enjoyment—! such was the position and such the feelings of the Parisian citizens after Robespierre's fall. They

could not move a single step, or pass a single day, without crossing the tracks of their former afflictions. There were few families who had not furnished victims to the scaffold or the war; there was no rank or profession which had not experienced a deep derangement of its prosperity. The government of Robespierre, as we have seen, by its utter lawlessness and desperate violence, had ruined all parts of the country, all classes of the people, all departments of trade. No one chose to work, because no one was for a moment certain of reaping the fruits of his labour; every thing tended to shew that the State was the only proprietor, agriculturer, manufacturer and merchant, in the country. The consequences of this suicidal system made themselves felt even in Robespierre's lifetime, and became more and more disastrous every month after the fall of the dictator. Plentiful as had been the crops of corn during this year, the perverseness of men prevailed, after all, over the prodigality of nature, and a scarcity of provisions began to be felt in the autumn, which increased in the course of the winter to a complete famine. The rural labourers had been carried off as recruits, the horses had been seized for the army, the land-owners had been incarcerated by thousands, and the peasants had been scared away from the markets by the ridiculously low prices of the *maximum*. The bitterest complaints were sent up from all the towns; the authorities were no longer able, even by the greatest exertions, to procure a sufficient supply of corn. The case was not quite so bad, in most of the Departments, with regard to meat as to bread, because the law of the *maximum* had forgotten to fix a tariff for live cattle, and the peasants had therefore slaughtered as few beasts as possible in Robespierre's time, and now brought to market as much meat as was wanted at good prices. The capital alone derived no advantage from this state of things; for Paris had for centuries drawn its chief supplies from the west of France, from La Vendée and Bretagne,

and these districts were now thoroughly exhausted by the civil war. Even in the summer the butchers were only allowed to furnish meat when the purchasers brought police cards, and in the autumn the daily portion was reduced to a quarter of a pound a head. And thus many thousands of persons, otherwise in good circumstances, lived for months on herbs and vegetables. Instead of bread they made shift with cold potatoes, of which the supply was more abundant than usual, since Hébert and his associates had ordered that all persons should convert their pleasure-gardens into potato-fields, on pain of death. Even the rich man who gave a banquet added to his invitation a request that each guest would bring his own bread. Every morning the bakers' doors were besieged by a disorderly and clamorous crowd, who began to assemble a few hours after midnight, in spite of the winter cold, eagerly awaiting the approach of morning; and who, as soon as the shutters were opened, crowded and pushed one another in their wild efforts to seize at last a few ounces of moist and sticky dough, which nothing but hunger could render eatable. Towards the end of the year the thermometer stood for a considerable time at 12° below zero, and from similar causes a most distressing deficiency of fuel was added to the scarcity of food. The forests had been laid waste, the canals were choked, and the roads broken up; the dealers in wood and coal carefully avoided the towns, where the police or the mob might seize their goods in return for worthless paper. The case was more or less the same with all branches of trade and manufactures, as with these prime necessaries of life. Most of the manufactories had ceased to work, since the State had placed both workmen and raw materials under requisition. Foreign trade no longer existed; what little the war had spared had been destroyed by the absolute prohibition of the export of money; and for nearly a year the mere title of merchant, like that of priest or nobleman, was sufficient to draw down the deadly hatred of the Jacobins on him who

bore it. Every man lived on his capital, gave up all active business, and broke off his mercantile connexions.

Since the fall of Robespierre, indeed, a great change had taken place in all these circumstances. The *maximum*, which in spite of all terrorising measures had never obtained complete mastery, became at once a dead letter, when the transgression of it was no longer punished by death or transportation. The artisans, merchants, and manufacturers, once more saw the possibility of labouring and earning; and business began to revive. But the difficulties still to be overcome were enormous. All the natural relations of property had been thrown out of gear by the enormous confiscations; in Paris half the houses belonged to the Republic, and were thrown away at irregular and disorderly auctions. The *assignats* fell daily, and necessarily dragged down the credit of the State and the individual citizens with them. No one felt any confidence in the future in any respect; no one dared to make an investment for any length of time, and it was still accounted a folly to curtail the pleasures of the moment, to acquire or save for an uncertain future. The intense feeling of triumph and joy which had filled the hearts of the masses since the 9th of Thermidor, and which no obstacle or privation could suppress, now manifested itself in all directions with tumultuous violence. Life had so long been worthless that they now determined to taste its delights, at whatever cost. Whoever possessed a handful of *assignats* or silver coins, hastened to spend them in keen enjoyment, and the eager desire to catch at every passing pleasure filled each heart with wild pulsations. In the autumn all the theatres had been reopened, and were frequented with untiring zeal. The audience added zest to the pleasure of the representation by noisy interference; one evening a Jacobin actor was compelled to beg pardon on his knees for his political opinions; on the next, the *Jeunesse dorée* climbed on to the stage to destroy the bust of Marat;

on the third, they interrupted the play by singing reactionary songs, or by a fight with angry Jacobins. The *cabarets* and *cafés* were no less filled than the theatres. Evening after evening every quarter of the city resounded with music and dancing. Men recalled the times, in the Reign of Terror, when they were forced by the command of Government to dance at the national festivals, with grief and rage in their hearts, and the remembrance sent them back with redoubled *abandon* to the giddy round. These enjoyments, too, received a peculiar colouring—glaring lights and gloomy shadows—from the recollections and feelings of the Revolution. In the saloons of the upper classes a society of a highly mixed character was to be found—influential statesmen, rich speculators, brilliant, and by no means cruel, dames. They talked of politics amidst the ringing of glasses and amorous intrigues; the ladies appeared in a costume which they called "antique" because it concealed nothing; the new aristocracy of the Revolution revelled in every kind of luxurious and shameless enjoyment. In other circles no one was received who had not lost a relative by the guillotine; the fashionable ball-dress imitated the cropped hair and the turned-back collar of those who were led to execution; and the gentlemen challenged their partners to the dance with a peculiar nod, intended to remind them of the fall of the severed head. When the weather was a little milder, numerous gardens were adorned with many coloured lamps and wreaths of flowers, and balls and banquets were held by moonlight and torchlight in the open air. The existing localities were not large enough to receive the throng of guests, and new rooms were continually prepared; one speculator decorated the court of the Carmelite monks, on whose walls traces of the blood of the 2nd of September were still visible, and another prepared the lately-levelled graves of the churchyard of St. Sulpice as a dancing floor. The feelings of the people, over-excited, and rendered callous by the horrors of the pre-

ceding year, shewed no repugnance, and these balls, in the midst of blood and rubbish, were as much frequented as any of the others. And thus the most opposite things were brought into close and harrowing contrast. When the jovial crowds dispersed to their homes towards morning, they were met in the dimly-lighted streets by the starving and freezing creatures, who began their miserable siege of the bakers' shops as early as 2 o'clock. And whilst in the exterior circle of the city, in the *boulevards*, every kind of enjoyment and profusion was to be met with, it was dangerous to tarry a quarter of a league outside the gates. From the general scarcity of food and the negligence of the authorities, the roads became extremely unsafe, and news of attacks by numerous bands of robbers was continually brought to the city, so that the mails never ventured into the country without a guard.

These details will be sufficient to characterise the condition of the country, and the dangers which impended over it. The leaders of the Moderate party in the Convention clearly perceived that it was above all things necessary to open the sources of production, and to give the people work; and, from the beginning of November, not a day passed in which the earnest attention of the Assembly was not called to these questions. The course of things was exactly the same as in the party strife of politics. The Left condemned with the greatest anger every deviation from the late system. They declared that to repeal the *maximum*, and sanction the freedom of trade, meant nothing else than to hand over the people to the avarice of the egoists, the monopolists and the usurers; that the State was bound to guarantee the means of existence to every citizen, and consequently must not allow a hard-hearted trader to drive the poor artisans to despair by excessive prices. The majority wavered for a long time in doubt and apprehension. They saw, indeed, clearly enough, the fatal perversity of the *maximum*, but they apprehended dangerous convulsions during the transi-

tion to better principles. It was only too probable that the abolition of forced prices might for a time, before any perceptible impulse had been given to production, increase the scarcity of all wares, and thus add to the distress and discontent of the poorer classes. That which first led to the enactment of the *maximum* was, as we know, the fact that the dealers made a difference between money and *assignats:* and it was now apprehended that the abolition of the law would widen this difference, *i. e.* depress the value of paper money; and, since the State was supported exclusively by *assignats*, every other evil seemed more tolerable than a further depreciation of the paper money. The progress made was, consequently, extremely slow. On the 8th of November it had been very clearly proved that the farmer could not possibly raise corn at the legal price. Various plans were proposed, some deputies advocating a gradually sinking *maximum*, and others different tariffs for the North and South of the kingdom; but they contented themselves at last with according to the corn-growers a small addition to the previous price of corn. The question of home production being settled, their attention was turned to foreign trade; for both had been equally destroyed during the Reign of Terror. On the 9th of November, Johannot proposed that the sequestration which had been laid on the property of the subjects of all the belligerent Powers should be removed. The latter, of course, had made reprisals, and Johannot was able to prove that while France had confiscated about 20 million francs of foreign property, the French citizens had forfeited more than 50 millions. In spite of these figures, however, he was unable to prevail over the Jacobins, or to gain a majority. Another obstacle to foreign traffic was the unlimited power of the authorities to make requisitions of every kind. No foreigner would venture to send a transport of goods to France which, as soon as they had crossed the French frontier, might be stopped by the first Conventional Commissioner, and appropriated at an arbitrary price. In

this case the Government succeeded, on the 26th of November, in taking a decided step, and obtaining a decree giving entire security to foreign trade in the necessaries of life — and, on the 27th, in all articles not forbidden — against all danger of requisition. This first success paved the way for others. On the 2nd and 3rd of December, a fresh discussion was raised respecting the scarcity of bread, coals and wood. In consideration of the pressing necessity, the Committee of Public Safety had once more had recourse to revolutionary measures, and had ordered an extraordinary felling of wood; whereupon Cambon himself cried out, that if this was done in all the Departments, the forests of the country would be ruined for ever. On the 7th similar complaints were made of the want of flax and hemp; it was proposed that loans should be made to the manufacturers — that a Chamber of Commerce should be formed, &c.: but Thibaudeau cried out: "No board or committees will do any good; the only safety lies in complete freedom of trade, and in the abolition of the *maximum*." Other voices supported him by saying that the *maximum* was already abrogated by the force of facts, for that otherwise every honest merchant would have long ago been ruined; the result was that an order was issued to the Committees to bring up a final report on the whole question.

These debates took place during the same days in which Carrier stood at the bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and Lecointre renewed his impeachment of Collot d'Herbois and his associates.

While the Committees were deliberating on the details of the report, new phases of the great question were continually presented to the Convention, new consequences of the unbounded tyranny which the Reign of Terror had spread over France. On the 10th of December a melancholy procession appeared at the bar of the Assembly, composed of the widows and orphans of the executed citizens, whose property, according to the revolutionary laws, had been for-

feited to the State. These unhappy people described their boundless sufferings: the Authorities had confiscated not only the property of the condemned husband, but the fortune of the wife, and the inheritance of the children from the mother's side; they had seized not only houses and money, but all their furniture, clothes, linen, and household utensils, and then turned the poor creatures, helpless and destitute, into the streets. In an *accès* of humanity the Convention ordered the Committees to make a more particular report on these cases, and decreed on the spot the suspension of the sale of the remaining furniture. But immediately afterwards revolutionary considerations made themselves heard. "If you restore the furniture," said Lecointre, "you will soon have to give up the estates also; you will be condemning the whole Revolution; you will find no more purchasers for your domains, and you will destroy your finances by depriving the *assignats* of the foundation of a firm security; in a word, you will not be able to halt in your reactionary course." The Convention, which was still wavering, allowed itself to be intimidated, and revoked its decree. Eight days afterwards similar questions called forth similar apprehensions. Merlin of Douay brought up a report in the name of the Government on the case of the Alsatian peasants, who in the autumn of 1793 fled from the country to escape the fury of Eulogius Schneider. Schneider had caused several thousands to be cut down, and more than 30,000 had escaped across the Rhine, and thus exposed themselves to the dreadful penalties of the emigrant law. The same thing had happened in the North on the frontiers of Belgium; a number of the best workmen had fled out of Lyons from the horrors of the civil war; and of thirty thousand looms only eighteen hundred were now at work. Nothing seemed more important than to restore so many skilful hands to the industry of the country; and Merlin, accordingly, procured a decree, calling on the fugitives to present themselves be-

fore the Commissioners of their Departments for the further examination of their case. On this occasion, too, the Deputies of the Mountain rose to protest with the greatest impetuosity: they said that nothing required to be treated with more delicacy than the laws against the *Émigrés;* that if one were allowed to return, all the others would present themselves under a similar pretext, demand back their estates, and thereby destroy the security of the *assignats,* and give the death-blow to the sinking credit of the State. They actually succeeded somewhat later in carrying a revocation of the decree: the Convention wished, indeed, to return to the paths of law and freedom within the limits of modern France, but the *Émigrés,* no less than the priests and noblemen, appeared to them, without exception, pestiferous and outlawed ingredients of the *ancien régime.*

Under these exciting circumstances the Convention received, on the 22nd, the report on the law of the *maximum.* It was brought up by Johannot and Giraud, and recommended, as was to be expected, an entire abandonment of the communistic system. It further proposed a strict enquiry into the state of the finances, freedom of commerce, reduction of import duties, restoration of the property belonging to subjects of the belligerent Powers, and lastly abolition of the *maximum.* The Convention first voted a postponement of the question for three days with a views to riper consideration. But the feelings of both friends and enemies on the subject were too strong to be controlled. As early as the 23rd Lecointre broke the ice by proposing that they should repeal the *maximum* law in general, and retain it only in the case of corn, the most absolutely necessary food of the people. This proposal brought all sides of the house into commotion. It was objected that in that case the peasant would have to give away his corn for 18 francs, while the State was daily paying 50 francs to foreign sellers; that the land-owner was now obliged to pay his workmen, who had received 2 francs a day, three years ago, four times as much;

that not only wages but all kinds of implements had risen in price, and that the cost of production alone was considerably more than the price of corn fixed by the *maximum*. A resolution was immediately passed, that all fixed prices of goods of every kind should be abolished from that day forward. In the succeeding sittings the law was discussed in all its details; the right of requisition was limited to the necessities of the armies and the capital, and all pending indictments on account of transgression of the *maximum* were quashed. "While our Government," said Boissy d'Anglas, "is endeavouring to secure the results of the Revolution to the people—on the one side against the Royalists and *Émigrés*, and on the other against bloody-minded men and murderers —it shews itself in an equal degree both revolutionary and republican, *i. e.* a lover of justice and law; it endeavours to protect property, to restore credit, and to give new life to the annihilated commerce of the country."

The authors of this great restoration had the satisfaction of seeing that none of the unfavourable prophecies, on which their opponents had founded their resistance, were realised. The scarcity of provisions remained for a long time very great: the Reign of Terror had for two years crippled all production and destroyed all traffic; and until the new harvest was gathered in, no system in the world could have created something out of nothing, or converted want into superfluity. But the continuance of the *maximum* would have perpetuated misery and famine, and the abolition of the tariff at any rate caused no deterioration in the position of affairs. Prices rose but little, and kept pace with the value of the *assignats;* the latter, indeed, fell every week, but not more rapidly than it must have done under the circumstances, with or without the *maximum*, from the increasing mass of paper money and the difficulty of exchanging it for silver. During the Reign of Terror the *assignats* fell from 45 to 33 per cent, and from the 9th of Thermidor to the 23rd of December, from 33 to 22 per cent; and this gradual deprecia-

tion still continued. A month after the abolition of the *maximum* they stood at 19 per cent, and four weeks later at 17 per cent.[1] Robespierre himself would have been just as little able to prevent this, as he had been to keep them up at 40 in the summer.

The abolition of fixed prices was immediately followed, on the 29th of December, by the removal of the sequestration on the property of German, English and Spanish subjects. Three days afterwards Johannot did away with another favourite measure of the Reign of Terror—the prohibition of the export of coined money, and of all precious metals. On this occasion Boissy d'Anglas explained at length that they could obtain no foreign goods without paying for them in the end, either with ready money or with other goods; but that France could not export the latter, because her manufactures were ruined, and she must therefore return to money payments. He pointed out that the former government was likewise well aware of this, and had only issued the decree in order to collect all the money in France into its own coffers, and thus to become the sole proprietor in the land. "Our ministerial Commission of trade," said he, "was a gigantic institution, which supported 10,000 officials, carried on business with the whole of Europe, and cost countless sums; but if we enquire what it has done for us, we find that during the 19 months of its existence it imported 2½ million cwt. of corn, the most necessary of all articles, —*i. e.* scarcely enough for three days' consumption; so little is the most powerful government able to replace the free operation of private trade." In accordance with these views,

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[1] According to the accounts of the French ministry of finance (in Ramel, "*finances de la France en l'an IX.*"), with which the contemporary notices of the Swiss (Yvernois, *coup d'oeil sur les assignats*) exactly agree. The thousand times repeated statements that the old Committee of Public Safety maintained them at par, and that they sank rapidly from the spring of 1795, are only echoes of Jacobin pamphlets.

Boissy d'Anglas a few days later carried a decree for the dissolution of the Commission. "It was," he cried, "conceived in the same spirit as all the other measures of the unhappy system; it was designed to take possession of the whole trade of the country, just as other authorities of the all-powerful State endeavoured to monopolise the agriculture and manufactures of the land. Under such a rule France would become a corporation of monks."

After coming to these important decisions, the Convention had some more quiet weeks. The most encouraging intelligence was received from abroad: the French armies were at that time penetrating into Holland, the peace with Tuscany was concluded, the negotiations with Prussia seemed tending to a favourable issue, and the French government saw a possibility before it of attaining in a short time to the greatest of all blessings—the restoration of a general peace. The mass of the population were highly rejoiced at this; we know how closely the war policy was connected with the fury of the Revolution, and the citizens longed for peace abroad with the same fervour as for order at home. The people at large were almost unanimous on this point, and the Moderate party in the Convention had reasons enough not to oppose their wishes. For the recruiting, after the enormous exertions and losses of the former year, was attended with the greatest difficulties: and the Government was still more painfully oppressed by the want of money, which retarded the equipment of the troops in every quarter, and which, had it not been for the resources of the conquered countries, would have quickly ended in the utter disorganization of the armies. The Jacobins, it is true, drew from these facts an entirely opposite conclusion; just because they had no money at home, they said, they ought to extend their conquests far and wide, and support the emancipated Frenchmen at the expense of their slavish neighbours. But no sooner had this opinion been here and there openly expressed, than the public indignation against it was

manifested in the strongest manner. Whenever a Parisian section appeared at the bar of the Convention, they seldom failed to add to their charges against the Terrorists, that the latter, in addition to their other crimes, had been guilty of throwing obstacles in the way of a beneficent and necessary peace. The majority of the Convention, the Committee, and the Government, avoided expressing themselves on this point in any clear or decided manner. In the ruling party itself there was a great division of opinion; the majority was still unable fully to discard the traditions of the Revolution in foreign as well as in domestic policy, and endeavoured in both cases to hold a middle course. They were agreed with regard to certain formulæ: *e. g.* that the Convention wished to uphold freedom and justice—that it combated both Royalists and Terrorists—that it wished for peace abroad, but only a safe and honourable peace. But when these propositions had to be practically carried out, and applied to a particular case, a great variety of opinions was manifested, and the majority gradually fell into three distinct groups.

A set of men from among the Jacobins and the Thermidorians had united together under the title of Independents—all belonging to the former great party of the Mountain, and known as active participators in the general measures of the Reign of Terror, but not involved in the factious struggles between Danton, Hébert and Robespierre. They made no difficulty, therefore, in abolishing everything which could prove to be the special creation of Hébert and Robespierre; but they were resolved not to allow one tittle of the conquests of the Revolution, up to the spring of 1793, to be wrested from them. It was in accordance with these views that Barras procured a decree for the festive celebration of the 21st of January, the anniversary of Louis XVIth's execution. Among their leaders was Merlin of Douay, who had drawn up the terrible law against the *suspects;* Cambacères, who on the 22nd of January carried his motion for

the further imprisonment of the children of Louis XVI, in opposition to a milder one for their banishment; and lastly, the Abbé Siéyès, who, after years of silence once more appeared in the rostra, and, as formerly, endeavoured to inspire respect by taking up a mysterious and isolated position between the parties. Not one of them would at that time allow a doubt to be thrown on the continuance of the Republic, the maintenance of the *assignats*, or the retention of the confiscated estates, whether of the Church or the *Émigrés:* and in foreign policy, they inclined towards war and conquest, and supported single efforts after peace only as weapons against the other States of Europe. So that, after all, they were distinguished from the pure Jacobins by no principle of law or justice, but only by a somewhat different attitude in respect to current affairs, according to which they abandoned the hated chiefs of the late tyranny, helped to suppress the street riots and to abolish the communistic laws. Their real inclinations were decidedly on the side of the Left; if they had not had a personal fear of Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, they would gladly have reconciled themselves with the Jacobins, and sealed their alliance with the blood of the Royalists. What most of all decided them, was the certainty that their past conduct would inevitably annihilate them if the reaction should pass the line of defence which they themselves had drawn.

The Thermidorians, on the other hand—who numbered at that time about 150 members—were impelled by the same instinct of self-preservation more and more towards the Right. They too had once dipped their hands in the blood of the 2nd of September and the 21st of January, but their former deeds were completely thrown into the shade by their late breach with the Jacobins. They knew that destruction most certainly awaited them, not from a restoration to power of the former parties, but of the men of the Reign of Terror. To avoid this greatest of all dangers, they were ready to make any concession to the older parties; they combated

the Jacobins with deadly fury, and the Royalists with languor and gentleness. Nay, as early as the autumn of 1794, we find their chief carrying on zealous negotiations with emigrant Constitutionalists and liberal Royalists. They deliberated in common on the means of overthrowing the Jacobins, of recalling the 73 to their seats and restoring the Girondists; and the Thermidorians were not dismayed when their new allies mooted the question of the constitution of 1791, and the raising of Louis XVII. from the dungeon of the Temple to a constitutional throne. Nay more, in their unprincipled anxiety to secure their own personal interests at any price, Tallien and several of his friends even entered into relations with the agents of the emigrant Princes. On the 8th of January 1795, the Count of Provence was able to announce to a companion of his exile, that Tallien was gained over to the side of royalty, though he might not have the soundest views of what a monarchy ought to be. The Royalists looked on the capacity of Tallien and Fréron with contempt, and despised their character still more; and the latter, under other circumstances, would not have hesitated a moment to send their secret fellow-counsellors in cold blood to the scaffold. Their only object was to strengthen their influence with the *Bourgeoisie*, and under all circumstances to secure their own personal safety.

The third fraction of the majority consisted of the remains of the Centre and the old Right (numbering 230 members, after the recall of the 73) whose principal leaders were still Boissy d'Anglas, Durand-Maillane and Thibaudeau. Most of them had once tamely voted according to the commands of the existing rulers; had helped to proclaim the Republic, contrary to their personal convictions, on the first day of the Convention; had then voted against the execution of Louis XVI., and had witnessed the Revolution of the 31st of May with terror and disgust. The horrible experiences they had made since that time had further enlightened their minds, and inspired them with a certain degree of

resolution, the necessity of which was rendered more and more clear to them by the long series of their former defeats. It was no secret that very few among them regarded the Republic as possessing vitality, and that they would openly assist in restoring the monarchy on the very first opportunity. The Thermidorians, who, as old regicides, were not willing to build up the throne again without firm guarantees for their own safety, regarded them with shy mistrust, a feeling which the Moderates returned in the fullest measure from the bottom of their hearts.[1] They still held together for the time, carried on the contest against the Jacobins in the Convention, and wished for a speedy peace on easy terms with foreign Powers. It was with this view that they condescended during the winter to negociate with La Vendée and the Chouans, and to acknowledge as an almost independent Power those whom they had hitherto branded as robbers and bandits. This is the proper place for reviewing the events of the terrible civil war during the preceding year.

The struggle in La Vendée, which was on the point of being extinguished by the great defeats on the North of the Loire, was rekindled, as we have seen, by the unutterable cruelties of Turreau's "hellish columns." Although Turreau had more than 70,000 men under his command he was not able to overpower the troops of Stofflet, Marigny and Charette. The entire population had fled into the woods, into whose pathless depths the Republicans dared not venture; and in spite of hunger and privations of every kind they held out firmly, and continued the unequal contest against their oppressors with heroic perseverance. Charette above all was indefatigable, and inexhaustible in his resources; he was in perpetual motion between the enemy's columns, and was nowhere to be found or to be seized until he saw his opportunity, and then by a sudden rush he overpowered

[1] Mallet du Pan, Mémoires II. 120 ff.

an isolated opponent. The alarm was then raised in the nearest divisions of the Republicans, but before the reinforcements could hurry up Charette had disappeared again, to emerge in a few days at the opposite end of the theatre of war, to the terror and destruction of the enemy.

This went on through the whole of the spring, and Turreau's soldiers were at the same time brutalised and enervated by the incessant burnings and slaughterings which they inflicted on the occupied districts. In May, 1794, matters had come to such a pass that they nowhere dared to keep the field before the peasants, that Turreau withdrew entirely from Poitou and Anjou, and that Charette and Stofflet were able to establish a complete military and political organization in both these provinces. Carnot at that time recalled General Turreau, and, in spite of Robespierre's opposition, gave his successor, General Vimeux, permission to carry on the war in a more humane manner. The latter collected his troops in fortified camps on the borders of the country, and began his campaign by a proclamation, in which he offered the peasants a truce until the 19th of July. The Vendéans made use of this pause to complete the arrangements of their provisional government, and to open a correspondence with England, the British Ministry, and the Count d'Artois. They paid little attention to Vimeux's peaceful words; they had too often experienced the uncertainty of republican promises; it was more especially a clergyman, the Abbé Bernier, a restless, ambitious and crafty man, who used his influence, first with Stofflet, and through him with Charette, to prevent all thoughts of peace with the Republic. Vimeux, meanwhile, incurred the displeasure of the Committee of Public Safety, and was replaced by General Dumas; the contest then began afresh, but without any better results for the Republicans. On the contrary, Charette stormed two of their fortified camps and sent some of his bands to range as far as the walls of Nantes; so that General Canclaux, who succeeded Dumas in

October, openly told the Government that the Republic must make the first advances towards peace with the enemy, that the troops were exhausted, and that La Vendée, which they had intended to annihilate, was triumphant.

The republican cause was at that time scarcely more fortunate in the neighbouring province of Bretagne. The peasants of this wide peninsula had hitherto preserved their Celtic peculiarities almost unchanged. Not a tenth part of them understood French; they lived on their scattered farms with the same manners, dress, and modes of labour, which the Romans had observed among them seventeen centuries before. They had quite a mediæval attachment to their religion and their Church, whose dogmas and festivals they had adorned with a number of ancient heathen superstitions. They had scarcely any idea at all of State or politics; the Bourbon government had made no attempt to force its administration on these stubborn, cunning, and frugal people, but had left the collection of the taxes to men chosen and trusted by the peasants, and the administration of justice to the noble Seigneurs and the Parliament at Rennes. No one needed to serve in the army unless he offered himself voluntarily; but many thousands steeled their military courage in an eternal war against the Government officers who collected the salt-tax and other duties. When the Revolution took place, the peasants were highly pleased by the abolition of the feudal privileges and the royal tax on salt; but their opinions were completely changed when the persecution of the clergy began, and the first great levy of 300,000 men was decreed in the spring of 1793. Riots took place in all the districts; but the different bodies of insurgents were not united into one connected army, as in La Vendée, and the national guards of the towns generally succeeded in defeating the rebels; General Canclaux, therefore, who commanded at that time in Rennes, succeeded, in May in inducing the Conventional Commissioners to act with greater moderation, and, by shewing

mercy to the priests and postponing the recruiting, to appease the minds of the majority. A poor peasant, named Jean Cottereau, had distinguished himself in this movement above all his companions, and his family bore the name of Chouans (Chat-huans) or "night owls." He had been all his life a smuggler, but when seized had been pardoned by the king; and from his great strength and intrepidity, and his ardent religious devotion, he had always remained the hero and leader of his village comrades. The name of Chouan passed from him to all the insurgents of Bretagne, although he himself never led more than a few hundred peasants, who obeyed him, as they said, out of friendship. In the summer of 1793 the contest between the Gironde and the Mountain extended even to these regions. Count Joseph de Puisaye, one of the liberal nobles in the Constituent Assembly, had allied himself in Normandy with Buzot and his associates, in opposition to the Convention. He was a tall and stately man with much supple tact, which fitted him for every position in life; without great military talent, but full of personal courage and love of adventure; imposing and winning in his manner, equally skilful in inspiring enthusiasm into Breton smugglers and English Ministers; equally ready to join in a skirmish in the woods, or to shine in the aristocratic luxury of courts. After the fall of the Gironde, he joined the ranks of the Chouans, quickly gained their confidence, and was incessantly employed in endeavouring to bring their numerous bands once more into action, and to give them the organization and unity of a regular army. In doing this he met with the greatest difficulties. The Bretons were more stubborn, self-willed, and clumsy than the Vendéans, more cruel towards the enemy, and more impatient of control from above. Meanwhile the inroad of the great Vendéan army took place—the victories of Laval and Dol, and the march across the whole peninsula to Granville. A number of Breton volunteers had previously joined the Vendéans, and among them the gigantic and daring

George Cadoudal; Jean Chouan hastened to them after the battle of Laval, but Puisaye was hindered by the enemy's troops. The insurrection, however, immediately spread through four-fifths of the province, and the final defeat of the Vendéan army by no means restored peace to the land. The burning tree indeed had fallen beneath the blows of the Republicans, but the sparks were only spread the more widely, and kindled innumerable smaller conflagrations. Cadoudal now carried on the struggle in his own country with his own ressources. M. Boishardi, a nobleman of ancient family, excited the peasants in Morbihan, and Jean Cottereau kept Mens and its neighbourhood perpetually on the alert. They fought no great battles, but made chase after every isolated troop, seized the money-chests and mails, captured the republican officials, and occupied the whole hostile army by this restless guerillā warfare. Puisaye gradually gave them a firmer organization, induced most of the bands to receive an unprincipled but courageous adventurer—a so-called *Baron* Cormatin [1]—as chief leader of all their operations, and then hastened, in the summer of 1794, to London to deliberate with the English Government respecting a joint movement on a grand scale. In October, the Republicans had suffered such great losses that the Committee of Public Safety sent out their best general, Hoche, the celebrated saviour of Landau, to combat the Chouans. The general, who was as sharp-sighted in politics as he was vigorous in the field, sent a report in a few weeks of a similar tenor to that of Canclaux. He declared that unless something were done to propitiate the minds of the Chouans, this war would

[1] According to a note in the Moniteur, June 3rd, 1796, he was the son of a village barber, and his barony in the moon; he had fought in the American war, joined the Lameths, and afterwards played the demagogue with them; but having subsequently compromised himself by aiding Bouillé in the flight of the king, he had been obliged to emigrate.

never be ended; and the Committee of Public Safety, as we have seen, in the beginning of December, consented to issue a comprehensive amnesty for all those who should have laid down their arms within a month.

Every one knew that this was only the introduction to formal negociations of peace. General Canclaux and the Conventional commissioner, Ruelle, made every effort to communicate with Charette. A Creole lady, Madame Gasnier, living in Nantes, who had formerly nursed the royalist prisoners with self-sacrificing humanity, and protected them against Carrier's murderous bands, now made her way to Charette, not without personal danger, and brought him the first words of peace on the 28th of December. His first answer was a demand for the immediate restoration of the king to his throne, but he soon found it necessary to lower his pretensions. La Vendée, although for the moment victorious, was exhausted to the last degree by the long wars. At least a third of its population had perished in battle, or in prison, or by want and misery. Most of the towns and villages had been burned to the ground, or deserted by their inhabitants; in the town of Chollet only one man was left, and whenever he went out into the lonely streets to seek food, he was obliged to defend himself against the wolves which had taken possession of the deserted houses. Charette was of opinion that the country had abundantly manifested its willingness to die for King and Church; it was now time, he thought, to consider, not only political powers, but the happiness and misery of individual men. His officers agreed with their chief that an honourable peace ought not to be rejected, and two of them went to Nantes to settle the conditions with the Conventional commissioners. The latter demanded, first of all, the recognition of the Republican Government, which the Vendéans were ready to grant; on their own side they brought forward a long list of conditions, which made La Vendée virtually an *imperium in imperio*. No departmental or district authorities were to be

formed in the name of the Republic, the Catholic service was to be celebrated without let or hindrance, the country was to receive compensation for its war expenses, and Charette's troops were to be maintained in arms as militia in the pay of the Republic, and commanded by their present leaders. The Commissioners could not grant the province such a degree of independence, but they persisted in their assurances of their earnest desire of peace, and in private conversation declared their readiness to assist in restoring the monarchy as soon as possible. Such concessions almost made Charette doubt whether the negotiation was honestly meant; but all the intelligence from Paris confirmed the rising spirit of the monarchical parties, and he determined to run the risk. Stofflet and Bernier, on the contrary, would hear of no peace which did not commence by raising Louis XVII. to the throne of his fathers; Stofflet cried, "the King or death," and immediately recommenced hostilities. Nevertheless Charette attended a conference at the castle of La Jaunais, a league from Nantes, where the treaty was signed on the 18th of February. The Conventional commissioners, it is true, avoided the form of a bilateral contract, and Charette consented that the contents of their agreement should be published in the form of orders of the Commissioners; but in fact he gained several very important concessions. Among these were unlimited freedom of religious worship—the redemption of the royalist paper-money to the amount of 2 million francs—a general amnesty, protection, and support for all inhabitants without distinction—the formation of a national militia of 2,000 men—exemption of the youth of the country from all other military service—and considerable money-payments to the principal chiefs of the Royalists.[1] We shall hereafter become acquainted with the practical difficulties of carrying out these arrangements.

[1] The last point formed the sole contents of some often mentioned secret articles.

the worst thing was that from the very beginning neither side felt any confidence in the honesty of the other. Charette was strongly imbued with a feeling of distrust, and expressed it to his peasants on the very day after the conclusion of the peace. "Do you suppose," said he, "that I have becomme a Republican since yesterday? What we have agreed to is no peace, but a cessation of arms, which was indispensable to us. Under cover of this truce we can wait for the help of the monarchs of Europe, which has been so often promised us; we retain our arms and our colours, and if the enemy has laid a trap for us, we shall easily avoid it, since we see it beforehand, and I am in the midst of you."

Yet, however insecure the position of affairs might be, it was a fact that Charette had acknowledged the Republic, and the Republic the internal independence of La Vendée, and this understanding had its natural and ever-increasing effect. The war between Stofflet and Canclaux was continued in single bloody battles, but the former system of inexorable destruction was entirely given up, and the Republicans were indefatigable in their efforts for reconciliation after every collision. In Bretagne, the young general, Humbert, provided with comprehensive powers by Hoche and the Conventional commissioners, gained the ear of the frivolous and fickle Cormatin, as well as the most dreaded of the Breton leaders, the bold and steadfast Boishardi. Numerous conferences took place during December and January; and as early as the 12th of February, Cormatin and some other chiefs declared their willingness to make peace on the same conditions as Charette. The confidence on either side was no greater in Bretagne than in La Vendée. As late as the 31st of December, Cormatin had sent word to Count Puisaye that no arrangement could ever be come to, and that he was only negotiating to gain time and to unite with Charette. But General Hoche, on learning that several hundred *Emigrés* from London had landed, demanded a

reinforcement of 10,000 men from the Committee of Public Safety. There was, however, the same feeling of utter exhaustion in Paris as in La Vendée; the path of reconciliation was once for all entered, and one chief after another sent in his submission on the conditions of La Jaunais. In all quarters matters tended towards a temporary pacification of the much suffering land.

Moreover, about the same time, the Convention took a very important step towards closing the chief source of the civil war, by putting an end to the great ecclesiastical feud. At first, as we have seen, the revolutionary rancour was directed solely against the non-juring priests, while the "constitutional" clergy were organised as the hierarchy of a salaried State church. But subsequently to 1793 the turn came to the constitutional priests also. Their celibacy was abolished, and they were charged, like the non-jurors, with superstition and fanaticism; the worship of Reason was proclaimed as the established religion, and all catholic priests, without distinction, were subjected to every kind of persecution. This hostility against catholicism underwent but little change when Robespierre caused the existence of an *Être suprême* to be formally decreed; or even when the 9th of Thermidor brought the Reign of Terror to an end. The democratic leaders were well aware that the majority of the French people entertained Roman-catholic opinions; they saw no less clearly that these opinions were diametrically opposed to the principles of the Revolution. Their consciousness of these facts had hitherto prevented them from carrying out the "Rights of man" to their extreme logical consequences, by leaving all ecclesiastical arrangements to the free will of individuals. On the contrary, with the view of freeing the people from priestly leading-strings, even against their will, they had always adhered to the principle of a State religion, and had proclaimed, as such—in the place of Roman catholicism—the *cultus* of the "constitutional church," of Reason, and of the Supreme

Being, in succession. All these attempts, although made with unbounded severity, and backed by all the powers of democratic terrorism, had, in the main, entirely failed. None of these substitutes had been able fully to convince the mind or to gain the heart. Nay more, the insufficiency of each became more evident, in proportion as it receded further from the doctrines of the ancient faith. Nevertheless many of the Montagnards thought that they ought not to give up their hopes; they kept their object well in view, and looked about for milder, and, at the same time, more effectual, means of attaining it, in accordance with the change in the public mind since the day of Thermidor. Instead of brutal violence, they proposed, from considerations in themselves altogether sound, to substitute the gradual transformation of moral sentiments, by the all-powerful influence of education. They urged, therefore, that the Government should liberate the rising generation in the schools from the bonds of superstition, and imbue them with the spirit of pure philosophy; that it should exercise an influence on the habits of adults, by weaning them from the celebration of the Sunday, and instituting attractive festivities on the *decades*—the republican holidays. Unfortunately, the schools were for the most part broken up, and the proposed new system of instruction existed, for the present, only on paper. The decade festivals, too, were melancholy failures. The people had no taste for the republican idylls, with which for a whole year the guillotine had been surrounded. The Jacobin Montagnards grew extremely impatient. They incessantly repeated that the growth of fanaticism brought the greatest danger to freedom —that there was the most urgent necessity for some remedy by which a radical cure of the public feeling might be effected.

Thus far they were perfectly in the right—that their hopes of realising their political ideal were built on sand, unless catholic views could be supplanted by other and very dif-

ferent ones. But an existing religion is not to be put down by criticism and science alone, nor by official measures and official oppression; it can only be supplanted by another religion of greater power and vitality. Luther made head against the Popes of his day, because he was able to rouse the religious feelings of men more strongly, and to afford them deeper gratification, than his opponents. And in the same way the disciples of Loyola, a hundred years later, gained their victory over the theology of the Lutherans, from which the life and spirit had departed, because they fought under the influence of a fresh and ardent religious enthusiasm. But for the task of founding a new State religion, the Montagnards lacked nothing more nor less than a *religion* itself.[1] With respect to the relation between man and man, they had set up a complete and elaborate system of morality, politics, and international law; but in regard to the relation between man and the Infinite, they had nothing but negation; no wonder then that the results too were merely negative.

And thus they were unable either to destroy the ancient Church, or to establish another *cultus* in its place. If war and violence were ever to cease in the religious world, the revolutionary government had no alternative. Hazardous as it might appear to them, considering the undoubted attachment of the great mass of the people to catholicism, they were obliged to make up their minds to acknowledge

[1] This appears to me to be the simple answer to Edgar Quinet's book on the Revolution, the scope of which lies in the single proposition; the Revolution failed to attain its object because it was not able entirely to destroy the catholic church. I shall certainly not deny that the prevalence of Roman catholicism in a nation, adds greatly to the difficulty of establishing a liberal or republican form of government; but as long as the liberal party is unable to overcome the hostile hierarchy with weapons drawn from the armoury of religion itself, it can do nothing more perverse and futile than to strengthen its opponents by material persecution.

the freedom of the individual, as the basis of their ecclesiastical system. The Convention girded themselves most unwillingly to the task; and came to a clear and definite resolution in this matter with the same reluctance, as on questions of political economy. But in both cases they were driven on by the logic of facts. As early as September, 1794, financial distress had led to the adoption of Cambon's motion, that the State should for the future pay nothing towards the maintenance of the churches or the ministers of any religious confession. But if the cost of the externals of religious worship was to be defrayed solely from the contributions of the worshippers, it was impossible to evade the conclusion, that its internal arrangements also must be committed to the same hands, and all ecclesiastical regulations on the part of the State withdrawn. Yet many a month passed away before the Convention could be brought to acknowledge the conclusiveness of this reasoning. Even in December, 1794, Gregoire appealed in vain to their compassion and their sense of justice, to put an end to the lamentable persecution of the priests. As late as January, 1795, a decree was issued which enjoined afresh the strictest observance of all the laws against non-jurors. It needed all the pressure exercised on the Convention by the state of affairs in Paris, in the Departments, and La Vendée, before Boissy d'Anglas was allowed, in the name of the Government commissions, to lay the final law before the Assembly on the 21st of February. Even then the feeling of the members was such, that the proposer recommended them to grant freedom of worship chiefly with the view of depriving religion of the halo of martyrdom, and thereby opening the way for the principles of philosophy, to be diffused by the future system of public instruction. Henceforward religious dogmas and religious worship were to be left entirely to the decision of the individual citizen; the religious communities were to be treated, without either favour or hindrance of any kind, according to the general laws of association; and the State

was to look down upon religious error with the eye of enlightened tolerance. Accordingly the law ordained that no worship might be disturbed; that, as the State contributed nothing towards the maintenance of religion, no religious services might be held in the churches, because these had become the property of the nation; that, as religious worship had no longer any connection with public life, the meeting-houses should bear no external marks of their destination; that the congregation should not be publicly summoned to the place of worship; and that no religious service should be performed outside the meeting-houses. To fill up the measure of these arbitrary restrictions, the Convention added to this law an express declaration, that the existing penal enactments against non-jurors were not thereby annulled—a declaration which in the connexion in which it occurs was barbarous even to absurdity. The non-juring priests had been threatened with punishment, because they refused to acknowledge the law by which the civil constitution of the church was fixed. But now, in November, 1793, the constitutional church itself was dashed to pieces by the revolutionary rulers, and its fragments declared by the new law to be mere private associations, like the congregations of Protestants or Jews. And yet the Catholic priests were to remain subject to the most cruel punishment, for refusing to take the oaths to a constitution which no longer had any existence! The worst caprices of power are never without some juridical theory to justify them; and in this case, too, it was argued, that these priests had incurred the penalty of the law against non-jurors at the time of its existence; and that one could not, without a violation of the *jus quaesitum*, deprive the culprits of the benefit of the penalties once imposed upon them!

The new law, therefore, was in the highest degree defective. It announced as its guiding principle, not only the religious freedom of every individual, but the complete separation of the Church from the State. While, hitherto, the State

had claimed absolute supremacy over the Church, it now declared its own absolute nullity in respect to ecclesiastical affairs. Here too the Revolution oscillated from one extreme to the other; but it fully indemnified itself in practice, by embittering the liberty it had just proclaimed by a series of arbitrary restrictions, some of which were maliciously trivial, such as the prohibition of church bells, and others were odious remnants of persecuting laws, such as the maintenance of the penal enactments against non-juring priests. Yet in spite of all these drawbacks, the law of the 3d of Ventose, when compared with the former state of things, was an immense gain. A load of cruelty, oppression and misery, was thereby suddenly lifted from off the land, the consciences of many millions calmed, and the open war between Church and State brought to an end. In principle, at any rate, the Revolution had given up its claim to force the existing generation of men by imperious commands, into new religious convictions.

These proceedings excited the liveliest wrath among the Jacobins and their fellow-politicians. The Convention, they said, were negociating with the "robbers" of La Vendée, as one sovereign power with another; they were punishing the leaders of the "hellish columns," as if sound revolutionary opinions were no justification for arson, rape and murder; they left it to the "pedlars" to fix the price of their own wares, and the poor people—the men of the 13th of August and 2nd of September—were to see how they could still their hunger by hard work. The *Émigrés* returned into the land by troops in spite of all the penal laws; the *Jeunesse dorée* threw Marat's bust into the sewers, and the Convention moved his bones from the Panthéon; royalist pamphlets were sold in masses in Paris, and the authors, if they were prosecuted at all, were acquitted by the Revolutionary Tribunal. The Mountain party daily raised fresh storms upon these points in the Convention; the deputy Duhem, an impulsive and passionate man, carried matters so far that

he was at last punished for his abusive words and riotous behaviour by an imprisonment of several days. Whereupon Choudieu and Cambon declared that the whole party would accompany their friend to his place of confinement. Dumont replied, that the object of all these disturbances was to hinder the approaching and much-desired peace with foreign countries, because the men of blood well knew that their rule would not be endured by the returning armies. In February the indications increased that the Jacobins intended to liberate their threatened chiefs by a violent outbreak, and to excite the lower classes against the Convention. In spite of the incessant transports of corn which arrived in Paris, reports were spread that the magazines were empty, and that after a few days the bakers would furnish no more bread. People were seized in the neighbourhood of Paris who were stopping the transports of corn, and advising the Communes to consume it themselves, since Paris was plentifully supplied. Then followed daily riots at the bakers' shops, complaints of insufficient supplies, and anger at the continual want. The Government, on the other hand, represented that the consumption of flour was extraordinarily great, and that under the *ancien régime*, with a more numerous population and a greater influx of strangers, only 1,500 sacks a day were required; that now 1,900, and often 2,000 sacks, and even more, were distributed and consumed in a day. Boissy d'Anglas, who made these communications, concluded by declaring that it was the adherents of Robespierre who kept up this excitement to stop the proceedings against Collot d'Herbois and his associates. Meanwhile the news arrived of the Jacobin risings in Nancy, Toulon, and Marseilles; they were, indeed, quickly suppressed, but they served to exasperate the citizens afresh, and several Parisian sections repeatedly demanded the speedy punishment of the great criminals. The Commission of Twenty-one were working with might and main, and several times asked for delay on account of the enormous mass of materials which

they had to wade through. At last, hard pressed on every side, Saladin brought up the report on the 2nd of March, which was listened to with the greatest suspense. He unfolded in a speech of several hours the endless series of cruel and illegal oppressions with which the Reign of Terror had afflicted the land, and concluded by moving that the four accused Deputies should he brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Legendre then carried a decree amidst great applause for the immediate arrest of the accused; whereupon Collot d'Herbois, with unfaltering firmness, demanded that a strict examination should be made into his own deeds, but that the sentence should be passed according to the principle that everything necessary was just and unpunishable—"for otherwise," he cried, "past, present and future are destroyed, and the entire Revolution is condemned." The discussion on the act of impeachment was then fixed for the 22nd, in order to afford the prosecuted members time to prepare their defence, and the Convention time for deliberation.

Public opinion was meantime turned with similar views in an opposite direction. As it had brought about the criminal indictment against Collot d'Herbois, it now again took up the cause of the proscribed Girondists. On the 1st of March numerous deputations from three Parisian sections appeared at the bar of the Assembly, to demand the restoration of these unjustly condemned men. The Moderate party had always been in favour of this measure; the Thermidorians, who were looking forward to a hot contest with the Jacobins, dropped their former objections; and even amongst the Independents, many yielded to the pressure of the popular movement. On the 8th of March, therefore, the decisive debate was held. Chenier brought forward a proposition to the effect that the restoration of the Girondists was just, that it was demanded by the sovereign voice of the nation, and that it would lead to no further steps of vengeance in the Convention. Bentabolle raised his voice from the Moun-

tain in violent opposition. "You appear," said he, "not to estimate the consequences of such a resolution. Whence come we? Whither are you leading us?" Several voices interrupted him with the answer: "Out of tyranny to the Republic." He resumed his argument. "You forget that several of these Deputies lie under a formal criminal indictment."—"This indictment," shouted his opponents, "was wrested from the Convention itself by the force of terror." "Then," he cried, "all your laws and all your indictments are futile; and terror has in an equal degree, day by day, ruled in the Convention." He was interrupted by a still greater tumult from every side; they reminded him that when the Girondists were expelled, the Convention was surrounded by armed bands, kept prisoner in its own hall, and threatened with violence and murder. "Then," cried he, "you wish to attack the 31st of May."—"Yes, yes," resounded from the Right. "Then you arraign the Parisian citizens, the 80,000 who made the 31st of May." André Dumont rose with great zeal, and said: "we do not wish to prosecute the 80,000 ignorant men, but the malignant leaders who at that time seduced the people to a breach of the law." "Posterity," said Siéyès, in a speech of some length, "will divide the history of the Convention into two sections; before the 31st of May the Convention was oppressed by the misguided people, and after that date the people was oppressed by the enslaved Convention." The organ of the Government Committees, Merlin of Douay, now ascended the rostra. "I do not say," he began, "that courage is necessary to perform my task, but I do say that I see no possibility of declining it." He then laid the facts before them, and concluded with a motion, that as the faction of the tyrants, which had to be taken into account in December, was no longer dangerous, the Convention, by a grand act of justice, should recall the expelled Deputies to their seats.

A long loud burst of applause greeted the conclusion of

his speech. In the division Goujon alone voted against the motion, but some members of the Left abstained altogether. And thus the remaining victims of the Jacobin party-feud were restored to political activity. The rescued members were sixteen in number, and among them Louvet, Lanjuinais, Doulcet-Pontécoulant, Isnard, Larivière. "Why," cried Chemier, "was there no protecting asylum to save the eloquence of Vergniaud and the genius of Condorcet, from the hands of the executioners?" On the following day the festival which the Mountain had ordered to celebrate the 31st of May, was prohibited; and on the 20th it was decreed, on the motion of Boissy d'Anglas and Tallien, that the sale of the confiscated goods of the condemned should not be proceeded with, but that the Committees should report more particularly respecting their restoration. In fact, after the Convention had condemned the 31st of May, and had declared the resistance to it to be just, how could they defend the confiscation of goods which the tyranny of the Mountain had formerly inflicted on the advocates of justice?

There were many measures that were more injurious to the Jacobins, but none which wounded them more sensitively than this. The declaration that the 31st of May was a day, not of justice but of violence, condemned the policy of the Mountain from the first existence of the Convention. If the Gironde, as was now proclaimed by the nation through its highest organ, had acted legally and rightfully, then the death of Louis XVI. was a vulgar murder, and the dictatorship of the Committee of Public Safety was a brutal tyranny; then the question of the fate of Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes was already decided, and only accidental favour could save the forfeited life of one or two of their adherents. The Mountain, therefore, strained every nerve to take signal vengeance for such a deadly insult. When the Committee of Public Safety asked for full powers to conclude a treaty with Tuscany, the Mountain, without any reserve, told them to their faces that they were not to

be trusted to represent France in an honourable manner in dealings with foreign countries, and that the right of drawing up secret articles could not be granted to them. It was well known that the peace with Prussia, which could not be concluded without secret articles, depended entirely upon the possession of that right. The Parisian press loudly demanded it, and pressed for a peace, even on the condition of giving up all the conquests made by the Republic!—but the Jacobins only declared with the greater fury, that the patriots ought to reject every separate peace, if it were only because the aristocrats and egoists demanded it with such malicious meanness. It became clearer every day that peace would be impossible without a fresh defeat of the Jacobins; it was evident also that a new and violent conflict with the latter was close at hand.

The movement in the workmen's quarter assumed a more and more threatening character. On a motion of Boissy d'Anglas it was resolved, on the 13th of March, that every inhabitant of Paris should receive one pound of bread a day, and those who were employed in heavier labour a pound and a half; and thereupon Boissy reported, on the 16th, that the workmen of St. Antoine would have nothing to do with the mischievous plots of the disturbers of the peace. But on the very next day a large crowd of the people, calling themselves a deputation of the sections of Finisterre and the Observatoire, appeared at the bar of the Convention to demand alleviation of their distress, and to express their regret that they had made so many sacrifices for a revolution which left them to perish. Thibaudeau, as president, returned a severe answer; and Boissy d'Anglas laid vouchers before the Assembly shewing that the city-administration, in accordance with the law, had distributed, on the preceding day, flour for a pound and a half of bread per head to one half the population, and for one pound of bread to the other half. But the petitioners would not leave the hall, and beating upon the bar with their fists loudly

cried for bread. At the same time there was a tumult in the antechamber, where a large number of drunken women called on the people to rise; large mobs repeatedly forced their way in, and order was only restored by the intervention of the armed force. That the whole scene was got up to order was proved two days afterwards, when the two Sections, in whose name the petitioners had come forward, declared that they knew nothing about the affair; but it was all the more evident that this riot was only the forerunner of more serious disturbances. On the 19th the Left announced another point of the programme which was to be the subject of contention in the impending struggle. Lecointre of Versailles, the first assailant of Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, had been deeply alarmed, in his nervous shortsightedness, by the recall of the Girondists to their seats; he had immediately deserted his former friends, and returned to the Mountain, and now pressed forward to the front ranks of the Left with the same impetuosity as he had formerly manifested on the side of the Right. In a speech of two hours he supported his proposition, that the time of revolutionary government was passed, that it was now urgently necessary to return to some definite condition, and that the Convention, without any further delay, ought to put in operation the Constitution of 1793. Since the Mountain had lost possession of the powers of government, and of the majority in the Convention, its members had several times called that Constitution to mind, which under other circumstances they had themselves been most zealous in suspending. They had little hope indeed that fresh elections in France would restore the majority in the legislative body to the Jacobins, but they knew that under that Constitution - which guaranteed to the people unlimited right of association, unconditional right of insurrection, and an unequivocal claim to be supported by the State—no strong government of any kind was possible. They therefore took up again with the greatest zeal the law which the country

had almost forgotten, the proclamation of which would in itself include an honourable justification of the 31st of May. Lecointre, too, lauded that day of revolution in his speech, together with the 14th of July and the 10th of August; the Left clapped their hands, the majority raised a tumult; it was with difficulty that the speaker brought his address to a conclusion, and the Convention referred his motion to the Committees for their report. Meanwhile the day was approaching for the debate on Collot d'Herbois and his associates, and the Jacobins redoubled their efforts to save their former chiefs. They succeeded by degrees in gaining ground again among the workmen of the Faubourgs; and on the 21st a deputation from St. Antoine appeared to demand better food for the people, and the Constitution of 1793. A crowd of several thousand persons had joined them, and awaited the result in front of the Tuileries, employing themselves, meanwhile, in an active chase after the *Jeunesse dorée*, several of whom were severely beaten or ducked in the ponds of the palace-garden. In the Convention the president Thibaudeau first replied to the petitioners that he should never have ascribed the crafty petitions which had been presented to the Assembly to the sturdy and honest friends of freedom in St. Antoine. Then Tallien rose to denounce the people, "who so eagerly demanded the Constitution to-day, which they themselves had formerly locked up in a chest;" and he asked, amidst continual uproar from the Mountain, for a speedy resolution respecting the means of bringing the Constitution into operation. Thereupon a city Section appeared, to express their hatred of the Terrorists and to demand that they should he disarmed; whereupon Thibaudeau left the president's chair to speak the decisive word from the rostra. "Never," he cried, "will I vote for bringing into immediate operation a constitution which is not democratic, because it would once more hand over the national representation to the power of the Jacobins and the Parisian municipality; a constitution which gives

the legislative body no power over the police in the city where it meets," which bestows on every fraction of the people the right of tumult and rebellion." He demanded that the matter should be postponed until a Committee had reported upon it. The Convention greeted this vigorous address, which went straight to the heart of the matter, with loud applause; and decreed, on Legendre's motion, the formation of a special commission, which should propose the organic laws necessary to the introduction of the Constitution. No one could be deceived as to the real meaning of this decree. To the demand for the Constitution of 1793 the majority had replied by decreeing a new Constitution. They gave a further answer by issuing a police law, on the motion of Siéyès, which threatened every *émeute*—every attempt to intimidate the Republic, the Convention, the Deputies, or the authorities—with the punishment of exile; provided means of quickly summoning the National Guard; and, in case of an insurrection in Paris, assigned the town of Chalons to the Deputies, or their representatives, as the place of meeting for the new Assembly; to which alone the authorities and the troops were to pay obedience.

Thus armed, the Convention began, on the 22nd, the debate on the accused members of the fallen government. Robert Lindet, Carnot, and Prieur of the Côte d'Or, the most esteemed of their colleagues, rose to defend them. Lindet described the inseparable responsibility of the whole Committee and the Convention, in the face of which it was impossible to single out individual members for prosecution and punishment. Carnot developed the same idea by pointing out that the mass of work had compelled the members of the Committee to divide the different branches of the administration among them, and then to sign the orders of their colleagues without looking at them. Prieur and his friends demanded to be included in the impeachment, that the former Government might be tried as a body. They all spoke with great pride of the successes of the old Committee of Public Safety,

and thereby roused more than once the lively indignation of the majority. The galleries, chiefly filled with the troops of the *Jeunesse dorée*, sang the "*reveil du peuple*," and hindered their opponents from striking up the "*Marseillaise*." A full week passed away in these endless discussions, in which the different parties mutually hurled at one another all the errors and crimes of the Reign of Terror. The relative strength and resolution of the factions left no doubt from the very first day what the result would be. The Jacobins bestirred themselves in the city with convulsive zeal; delayed, whenever they were able, the transports of bread, and urged on the men of the Faubourgs to present new "storm-petitions" to the Convention. On the 27th a deputation of women from the Halles of the old town came to demand bread. Boissy d'Anglas, whom, as president of the Committee of Supply, the people called "*Boissy-farine*," or "*Boissy-famine*," stated that during the last four months Paris had received 850,000 cwt. of corn, and on the preceding day 714,000 pounds of bread; that during the last few days, indeed, the rioters had succeeded in stopping the supplies, so that the Government was obliged to send out an armed force to protect them. The women, however, stood at the bar, and accompanied Boissy's speech with the constant cry for bread, until the guard was called to turn them out. Four days afterwards a new deputation from the Faubourg St. Antoine appeared, complained of the repeal of the *maximum*, reminded the Assembly that insurrection against oppression was the duty of the citizen, and demanded the liberation of the arrested patriots, the removal of the famine, and the proclamation of the Constitution of 1793. The president, Pelet, replied that the Convention was endeavouring to revive trade, the roots of which the criminal party had injured; that it was at that moment discussing the organic laws of the Constitution, and would take care to punish any interruption of its labours. On this occasion the galleries were occupied by workmen and *dames des halles*, who hooted

every speaker of the majority; the petitioners at the bar joined in the debates, and Goujon defended their riotous conduct with unblushing andacity. Everything was prepared for the decisive blow on the following day.

On the 1st of April (12 Germinal) the Left was in a state of violent excitement from the very beginning of the sitting. Crassous demanded the liberation of all those who had been arrested since the 9th of Thermidor; Ruamps declared that royalism was raising its head more shamelessly than ever; Bourgeois raised his fist at the interrupting shouts of the Right, and got into a personal encounter with Tallien and Bourdon at the foot of the rostra. A deputation of the *Section Unité* then called upon the Convention to remain at their post and judge the great criminals; Thuriot shouted in reply that royalism alone could speak in such a tone, and accused the majority of wishing to return to the monarchical constitution of 1791. Boissy d'Anglas had just begun to pourtray the abuses of the former system of maintaining the people, when a violent noise arose at the doors of the hall; the guard was overpowered after a short tussle, and a roaring mass of the people flooded the floor of the hall, waving their hats and crying for bread. All discussion was interrupted; when a speaker attempted to address the Assembly, the mob interrupted him with cries of "Bread! Bread!" The President begged them to defile through the house, but the women obstinately continued to cry, "Bread! Bread!" At last a man named Vaneck, who had been a leader on the 31st of May, came forward from the crowd, and in the name of the people demanded the annihilation of the usurers, the Constitution of 1793, and the liberation of the patriots. A long scene of disorderly tumult then ensued, and new crowds forced their way into the hall; the President, loudly called upon to put the demands of the patriots to the vote, firmly refused to do so until the hall was cleared; and during this contention the populace continually raised the cry for bread. This anarchical state

of things continued for more than four hours, until at last help appeared from without. The Government committees, from the very beginning of the tumult, had caused the summons to arms to be sounded in the neighbouring wealthy quarters; the battalions assembled by degrees, and at their approach the insurgents considered it advisable to make off. Hereupon the Convention proceeded without delay to take sharp measures against the rioters, and to secure their own future safety. On the motion of Isabeau it was voted that an attempt had been made against the National representatives, and that the originators of it should be handed over to the criminal tribunal of Paris. It was remarked that several members of the Left had called the President a royalist, and that the *émeute* had been got up for the purpose of liberating the impeached members. Amidst a storm of applause, therefore, André Dumont carried one motion for the immediate transportation of the four criminals to Cayenne; and Bourdon de l'Oise another, for the arrest of three other Montagnards, Choudieu, Chasles and Foussedoire. Member after member rose to contribute his portion to the history of Jacobin sins. Leonard Bourdon was arrested as a Septembrist of Orleans; Ruamps, for accusing the Committees of treason; Duhem, for calling the people of the Faubourgs the shield of *sansculotterie;* and Amar, as the intimate friend of Billaud and Fouquier; all these were arrested as accomplices in the rising, and ordered to be taken to the castle of Ham. It also became known that in some quarters of the city the Conventional commissioners had been abused and illtreated by the people; whereupon Barras procured the nomination of Pichegru, who happened to be in Paris, to the chief command of the metropolitan forces. The General restored order in all quarters of the city without great difficulty; so that on the 3rd of April he was able to make the laconic report to the Convention, that all its commands had been carried out. Meanwhile the wrath of the majority was fanned into a fresh flame by reports from

several Departments of Jacobin tumults, which from their occurring at the same time as the Parisian *émeute*, and being accompanied by similar demands, led them to suspect a wide-spread conspiracy extending through half the Republic. In Amiens a mob had plundered the transports of corn; in Rouen, they had demanded the liberation of the persecuted patriots; in Marseilles the Conventional Commissioner, Cadroy, had been obliged to send a Jacobin battalion out of the city to prevent an outbreak; and in Toulon nothing but the fear of the garrison kept the excited workmen in check. Whereupon the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, in a general report upon the insurrection, came to the conclusion that the Mountain in the Convention formed the centre of the conspiracy; and, in addition to the already arrested members, the *Comité* indicted Thuriot, Cambon, Granet, Hentz, Bayle, Levasseur, Crassous and Lecointre, as instigators and heads of the rebellion. The Convention passed a decree, without hesitation, for the arrest of all.

The success of the majority was complete. The Jacobin party was at last subdued in Paris—broken up and reduced to silence in the Convention. The first fruits of this victory were seen in the relations of France to foreign countries; the Government was now able to conclude the peace with Prussia.

CHAPTER III.

PEACE OF BASLE.

France and Germany in equal need of peace. — Conquest of Holland by the French army of the North. — The committee of public safety demand the cession of the left bank of the Rhine. — Deliberations of the Prussian ministry. — Haugwitz wishes to refer the boundary question to a future treaty of peace between France and the empire. — Examination of his policy. — Prussian proposals and French ultimatum. — The minister von Hardenberg obtains some concessions in Basle. — Conclusion of the treaty. — The moderate party in Paris hold out hopes that the integrity of Germany may be maintained.

It became clear towards the close of 1794 that the position of affairs on all sides was ripe for a peace between France and Germany.

The French armies were in the full career of progress and victory. The independence of the country had been splendidly re-established, and the respect for its power was greater in Europe than at any former period of the eighteenth century. But at the same time its internal resources were in a state of the greatest exhaustion, and the desire for peace and repose was universally felt by the whole population. It lay more particularly in the interest of the Moderate party, which represented the sentiments of nine-tenths of the nation, to conclude a peace with foreign countries as quickly as possible. For the course of the revolution had made it terribly clear to all parties, that conquest abroad was synonymous with convulsion at home, and that he who wished for domestic order must aim at a lasting peace with foreign Powers.

How desirable an honourable peace was for Germany, need not be enlarged upon. The two chief Powers were in open feud respecting Poland, by which Austria was led into a formal alliance with Russia against Prussia. Prussia was deeply exhausted by her warlike efforts on the Rhine and the Vistula; and though not as yet informed of the more secret views of the Imperial courts, had to fear the worst from their present attitude. The other princes of the Empire were utterly powerless; and, although divided among themselves by the struggle between Austrian and Prussian influence, were unanimous in their unconditional desire for peace. After Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine had fallen into the hands of the enemy, nothing was to be expected from a continuance of the contest but increasing disasters. On both sides, therefore, there was an equally urgent necessity for peace. On both sides the true interests of the nation demanded a peace which should be as secure in the future as possible; a peace, therefore, which should grant even the opponent repose and satisfaction. When Prussia began negociations in Basle there was a well founded hope of attaining this object, so desirable for the whole of Europe. The German Estates at Ratisbon expressed their wish for a speedy peace, with ever-increasing energy; in Paris the Moderate party gained ground every day, and the popular voice called more and more loudly for a termination of the terrible miseries of war. The Prussian Government gladly consented when the Committee of Public Safety requested them to send a confidential envoy to Paris, with whom they might carry on a direct preliminary discussion on the sentiments and interests of the two States. Harnier, the Secretary of Legation, who had hitherto conducted the conferences at Basle, received orders, on the 19th of December, to return from Berlin to Basle and to proceed thence to Paris.

Unfortunately during these weeks the French arms gained a new success, which changed the balance of power greatly

to the disadvantage of Germany, and increased the temptation to the rulers in Paris to continue in a course of revolution and conquest. Holland fell into the hands of the French.

We have seen above, that in the middle of September the Duke of York, discouraged by the demoralisation of his army, had given up his position on the Donger Heath, evacuated North Brabant, and retired with about 30,000 men to the other side of the Meuse, into the territory of the United Provinces. There remained as advanced posts in the land, which was now overrun with enemies, the fortress of Herzogenbusch with the strong fort Crèvecoeur, and further up the stream Grave and Venloo, and down the stream Breda and Bergen. The French army of the north numbered at that time not more than 48,000 men, who were greatly fatigued by the long campaign, badly clothed and insufficiently armed, and above all entirely destitute of siege artillery. If there had been in the army of the Allies the least degree of firmness and nerve, they could easily have opposed a long and obstinate resistance to an enemy so little superior in numbers. But the spirit of depression and dissolution was universal; under York's feeble command the troops lost discipline every day, the officers were divided among themselves, and shewed a want of confidence whenever they came into collision with the enemy. The abovementioned fortresses, therefore, capitulated in the most disgraceful way as soon as the French appeared before their walls. During the Dutch troubles of 1787, a Burgomaster, named Daendels, had distinguished himself among the revolutionists, had fled from the country when the latter were put down, and after the outbreak of the French Revolution had joined the legion of Batavian patriots, with which Dumouriez intended to commence his attack upon Holland in 1793. Now again he was in the front rank of the combatants who were endeavouring to expel the Orange rulers,

so odious to him. On the 27th of September he appeared with a small French force before Crèvecoeur, and began to bombard the place with his light field-pieces. He was not put to any great exertion; the commandant, Colonel Tiboel, immediately hoisted the white flag, and delivered up the fort on condition of being allowed to retire unmolested. The victors found forty-two heavy guns in the place, with which Pichegru immediately commenced the assault of Herzogenbusch. The land was flooded far and wide, the approach to the fortress was only possible by a few narrow dams, the fire of the besiegers was therefore only very partial and ineffectual. But the garrison was not numerous, the citizens timid, and the commandant, a Prince of Hessen Philippsthal, was a feeble old man; when, therefore, the French opened the channels for the water which flooded the plain, so that it ran back into the river again and left the land dry, the Prince capitulated at once, on the 10th of October, though the fortress was entirely uninjured. General Pfister, on the 24th, in an equally disgraceful manner, delivered up Venloo, which had been entrusted to him, after a two days' blockade, before even a cannon had been fired. The Allied army meanwhile stood inactive on the Meuse; the Duke of York marched his troops up and down the country during the stormy autumn weather without any plan, and immediately after the fall of Crèvecoeur determined to retreat again beyond the Waal; he was, however, induced by the urgent entreaties of the Dutch, to leave a small portion of his troops on the left bank. The Dutch regiments were utterly demoralized, so that General Hanstein once instructed his Hessians to shoot down every Dutchman who should retreat without orders. Nymwegen, the most considerable fortress on the Waal, was neither fully armed nor sufficiently supplied with provisions. The peasants, who were summoned to rise *en masse*, replied that they should certainly be left in the lurch, and that the French would them treat them with

double severity. When such sentiments prevailed among the defenders, it was no wonder that the very first attempt of the French to cross the Meuse was completely successful. They effected the passage, on the 18th and 19th of October, at Alphen, with 30,000 men, upon a single pontoon-bridge, during which the Allies left them completely undisturbed for 36 hours; and being then beaten in several sharp skirmishes withdrew in all directions beyond the Waal. Hereupon Nymwegen was blockaded by the French on the 1st of November. The position of affairs seemed to the Allies so hopeless, that the Hessian, Wurmb, in other respects an excellent officer, openly refused to take the command of the place and to be captured with it. General Walmoden, to whom York resigned the chief command at this point, gave orders on the 3rd for the evacuation of the town, which was effected by means of a bridge of boats, and with such precipitation, that the last division of the column, consisting of 1,100 Dutchmen, were left behind as captives to the enemy, by the premature burning of the bridge. The whole district between the Rhine and the Meuse, from the German frontier to the island of Bommel, was hereby abandoned to the French. It is true that the United Provinces were still protected by the broad Waal and the rapid Leck, between which rivers the main body of the Allies was now posted. But the winter was already approaching with an icy wind from the north, and the position of the troops might become very critical, if the slower stream of the Waal should be frozen sooner than the Leck, so that the superior numbers of the enemy might pass the former, while the still flowing waters of the latter barred the retreat of the Allies. Such a possibility made the Duke of York feel very uncomfortable, and he left the army on the 22nd of December to return to England, after entrusting the army to the joint command of the Englishman Hartcourt and the Hanoverian Walmoden, and thereby condemning it more completely to helpless impotence.

These events could not fail to exercise a decisive influence upon the internal condition of the United Netherlands. Every one saw a hostile invasion close at hand. The mass of the population were in a state of terrified excitement, the officials and officers of the Government were crippled by utter hopelessness. On the other hand, all those who had formerly belonged to the patriotic party began to bestir themselves with a courage and activity to which the collapse of the regular authorities, and the progress of the liberators, gave full scope. As early as the beginning of 1794 the chiefs of this party had come to an understanding with the Parisian rulers; small popular societies were formed to keep up the excitement of men's minds; money and arms were collected, and even a number of vessels equipped. The emigrant patriots, and among them the restless Daendels, distributed revolutionary pamphlets from the frontiers among the peasants, who were already filled with a thorough hatred of the Allies in consequence of the brutality of the English soldiers. The Government, threatened alike from within and without, appealed to their mighty allies with despairing prayers for help. A proposition then arrived from England, to unite Austrian Belgium—which Thugut now declared to be a mere burden to the Austrian monarchy—with Holland, and thereby to increase the inclination for peace in Paris. Prussia declared her full agreement with this proposal, and with every step which promised to lead to peace. But that which was for the moment the most essential—to afford protection by force of arms, and to reinforce the troops in the field—was not to be obtained either from London or Berlin. Austria, it is true, had just come to an agreement with the Russian Government for an energetic continuance of the revolutionary war, and accordingly sent a division of 20,000 men under General Alvinzy, which took post beyond the Rhine between Emmerich and Arnheim. But though this force occasionally exchanged shots with the French across the river, and thereby supported the western wing of the

Allied army, it did nothing for the defence of the interior of the land.[1] The Prince of Orange, therefore, resolved at last to present a humble petition for peace to the victorious enemy, and on the ground of an expression of the Conventional commissioner of the northern army, Lacombe St. Michel—*viz.* that France aimed at no aggrandizement—to send MM. Repelaar and Brantsen to Paris to enter into a separate negociation. The matter became more urgent when, on the 12th of December, General Moreau, who now held the chief command instead of Pichegru, who had fallen sick, untertook, at the urgent instigation of Daendels, a vigorous attack against the island of Bommel, and at the same time alarmed the position of the Hanoverians and Hessians on the Upper Waal. Meanwhile the Dutch succeeded in driving the French out of the isle again, and across the Meuse; Moreau found his own troops no less desirous of rest than his opponents, and the Conventional commissioner, Bellegarde, declared to the Envoys on their passage, that if Holland would honestly negotiate a peace, and subject all her foreign treaties to a revision, the Government at Paris would abstain from all further hostilities.

And in fact some weeks then passed in perfect inaction on the theatre of war. But on the 18th of December the winter set in with terrible severity; floating ice began to appear in the Meuse and the Waal, which soon became fixed in many places, so that both rivers were covered with broad bridges of ice. On the 27th the thermometer stood at 9° below zero, and both the Meuse and the Waal were completely frozen up, while the Leck was still open, and all

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[1] Ditfurth states the number of this force at 20,000 men, according to Porbeck and the Austrian military journal of 1820. This statement is confirmed by Thugut himself in a communication to the English ambasador, Sir Morton Eden. Vivenot speaks of 30,000 men, perhaps according to an official list; which, as he says in another place, always puts upon paper a third more than are actually present.

navigation hindered by large blocks of ice which floated rapidly down the stream. The allied generals looked about them with anxious irresolution. Hartcourt issued an order on the 24th to his subordinate officers to consider what was to be done, in case of a French attack upon the now wholly unprotected land. But before their deliberations had produced any result, Pichegru began to move on the 27th, chased the Dutch troops out of the island of Bommel, and pursued them rapidly over the icy surface of the Waal; whereupon the main body of the Dutch, which was stationed on the northern shore of this river at Tuyl, broke its ranks and fled in wild confusion to Utrecht. Two thousand French then took up a position at Tuyl as an advanced post; Pichegru did not yet venture to send his main body across the Waal, because, though the ice was strong enough to allow the troops to pass, it would not yet bear the artillery, and the English and Hessians drove the enemy once more from the right bank of the Waal on the 29th. The important island, however, remained in the hands of the French, and on the 4th of January they began a fresh attack in larger masses. It is true that some of the Hessians and Hanoverians made an honourable resistance; but General Hartcourt plainly declared that his troops were no longer fit for service, and on the 10th of January Walmoden gave orders for the retreat beyond the Leck. A sudden thaw which occurred at this time, once more afforded a prospect of defending this last bulwark of Holland; but on the 14th the cold returned with increased severity, and the surface of the Leck was covered with a strong bridge of ice. The allied army had melted away to 23,000 men, and these were in the most pitiable condition from hardships, disorder, and privations of every kind. Wallmoden found himself unable to resist the enemy who were more than double his numbers, and on the 15th he ordered a further retreat beyond the Yssel, that is, the entire evacuation of Holland. The soldiers dragged themselves slowly along, amidst unspeakable sufferings, through a thinly

inhabited and badly cultivated country, with the thermometer at 14° below zero, with scanty food and ragged clothing. A number of guns and carriages had to be left behind, because the horses continually fell on the ice of the wretched roads. The sick and wounded were frozen to death in the waggons; and the peasants, exasperated to the utmost by the plunderings and burnings of the English soldiers, slew every straggler who remained behind the body of the army. Although the enemy did not pursue them, it soon became evident that the feeling in the country, the demoralisation of the army, and the difficulty of obtaining supplies, rendered it impossible for them to remain even on the Yssel, and the miserable retreat was continued without delay beyond the Ems into Germany.

Meanwhile the Dutch Envoys had their first audience with the Committee of Public Safety on the 18th of January. As they had nothing to offer in return for a peace except the acknowledgment of the French Republic, they were dismissed with great displeasure. The Dutch patriots, too, were acting against them with the greatest zeal; and when Repelaar, on his own responsibility, offered the Convention a war contribution of 80 million guldens if Pichegru would halt, the patriots declared themselves ready to pay a fraternal subsidy of 100 millions, if Pichegru would take Amsterdam and overthrow the Orange dynasty. It was natural that in such a state of discord among the Dutch, the Committee should allow things to take their course. Pichegru sent one half of his troops to the Yssel, and led the other half into the interior of Holland. He reached Utrecht on the 17th, and Amsterdam on the 20th; and on the 23rd, Bonneau's division, advancing by way of Dortrecht and Rotterdam, occupied the Hague. The hereditary Stadtholder had embarked on the 18th for England, with his family, in a small fishing-vessel; the Government broke up, and throughout the whole country the committees, and the clubs of patriots, seized the reins of administration. The Committee of Public Safety had promised

them, that in acknowledgement of their friendly sentiments, and trusting to their future services, they would treat the country not as a conquered land but as an ally. This did not prevent their making large requisitions for the maintenance of their troops; but in other respects perfect discipline was preserved, the arrangement of their new polity was left to the patriots, and both public and private property were respected. This course of conduct was prudent as well as humane. At first the sailors in the ships of war, who were almost all zealous Orangists, had thought of taking their vessels to England, that they might not become the booty of the hated French. The Communes of Zealand had thought of asking the English Government for garrisons and ships to protect their islands, which might perhaps have forced the French to make the greatest exertions for months. But the friendly behaviour of the French leaders enabled the patriots to induce their countrymen to listen to terms, and to make concessions. The ships capitulated when a French troop of cavalry appeared on the ice of the Texel; Zealand submitted without a blow to the new order of things. In the same peaceful manner, and amidst the joyful greetings of the population, Generals Moreau and Souham completed in February the occupation of the Frisian provinces between the Yssel and the Ems.

This was a heavy blow to the coalition. The troops and money of Holland had been transferred to the service of an already too powerful enemy. In the approaching spring Lower Germany had to expect the attack of 70,000 fresh and well-fed troops, confident of victory; and the Estates of the Empire, on whom the protection of the land chiefly rested—Prussia, Hanover and Hesse—had lost both the resources and the spirit for a new contest. In Paris, on the other hand, the rulers were full of joy and triumph, and the party of Independents, which desired to continue the revolutionary policy in regard to foreign countries, obtained a decided preponderance over the tendencies of the

Moderate party. "We wish for peace indeed," they cried, "but only a glorious peace." What that meant Harnier was soon to learn.

He was brought into the Committee of Public Safety for the first time on the 7th of January, and then deliberated with the members on the 8th and 9th, for an hour each day. They all with one accord declared to him, that Prussia and France had similar interests, nay, that a firm alliance was necessary and desirable for both countries. For Austria, embittered by her fresh losses, would not neglect to take up again her old plans against the freedom of the Imperial Estates. Russia, again, was actually aiming at universal sovereignty; and nothing, they said, was more important than to raise a tremendous dam against her, by rallying the Swedes and Danes, the Turks and Poles round a Prusso-French alliance. France might then without difficulty seize Hanover, and thereby make Prussia a rich compensation for the insignificant loss of her provinces on the left bank of the Rhine. The other States of the Empire, always weak, always wavering, must be forced to an irrevocable decision; since otherwise they would inevitably fall back again under the influence of Austria. France, therefore, they said, could not grant a truce, but declared herself ready to make a definitive peace. She must insist on the possession of Mayence, and in general regard the Rhine as her necessary and natural frontier. This principle they declared to be irrevocable; but added that France would engage to procure compensation for the deprived Princes, either at the cost of Austria or from some other source.

The fatal word had been uttered, and the hope of a simple peace honourable to both parties, with which Prussia had entered into negotiations, now vanished into air. Harnier endeavoured to change the minds of his opponents. He pointed out that the abstraction of the Rhenish provinces would throw the whole Roman Empire into confusion, give

rise to endless complications, and hurl France herself into fresh calamities of war. He dwelt upon the inconsistency of stating that the aggrandizement of Prussia lay in the interest of France, and yet insisting at the very commencement of the negotiation in taking away Prussian provinces; of expressing a wish to see the whole German Empire under the banner of Prussia, and then expecting the king to look quietly on at the fall of Mayence and Cologne! "One would suppose," cried he, "that you really wished for an indefinite continuance of the war; and you will find it in this path, and by your avarice at last bring all Germany under arms." "You do us injustice," said the French, "we have the liveliest desire for peace." "Moreover," added one of them, "we know that Germany entirely shares in this feeling; you will never be able to kindle a national war against us."

The negotiation then returned to the proposal of a Prusso-French alliance. Harnier, with protestations of the most friendly feelings, immediately declared that an offensive alliance was impossible. "Our most urgent interest," said he, "is to mediate a general peace between the German Empire and the French Republic; this would become impossible as soon as we took part against the Emperor in your quarrel with Austria." The Committee expressed their great regret at this. They said that they could not admit of a formal mediation between themselves and the German Estates; that they would gladly acknowledge Prussia's services in this matter, but would not refuse a direct negotiation with any sovereign of the Empire. The worst thing was, they said, that the refusal of an alliance must exercise a decisive influence on the conditions of the peace with Prussia. To Prussia as an ally, the Republic would gladly have promised a definite compensation; to a merely neutral Prussia, they could make no such offer. Harnier expressed his opinion that this was nipping the peace in the bud. It was, he said, extremely doubtful whether his Government

would agree to the loss of the left bank of the Rhine at all; but that it was absolutely certain that without a sufficient compensation war was inevitable. Thereupon the Committee, after long discussion, condescended to declare, that while they insisted on the possession of the left bank, they would make no objection to Prussia's obtaining an equivalent territory on the right bank of the Rhine, and under certain circumstances would assist in obtaining it for her.

With such melancholy prospects Harnier was obliged to return to Basle. Barthélemy, who had opened the official negotiation with Golz in that place on the 12th, expressed the most favourable personal feelings, but said that three great obstacles worked counter to the desired Prussian mediation between Germany and France—the Jacobin party, the influence of England, and the intrigues of Austria. That Austria was in secret correspondence with the Committee of Public Safety also became known from other sources. In the beginning of December the Imperial Vice-Chancellor, Colloredo, informed the Bavarian *Chargé d'affaires* at Vienna, that the belligerent Powers were nearly agreed, and that the Elector would probably have to sacrifice a portion of his territory. At the beginning of January it became further known that the Emperor's brother, the Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany, was sending the Chevalier Carletti to Paris to negotiate a peace with the Republic. From the close relations which existed between Thugut and Manfredini, no one doubted that the main object of the Chevalier was to pave the way for a peace between Austria and France. The Prussian Government, in the face of these various difficulties, had now to come to a resolution.

The views of the Ministers at Berlin differed very widely from one another. The aged Finkenstein wished to declare at once to the Committee of Public Safety, that their demand of the left bank of the Rhine rendered peace impossible. France, after all, had no less interest in bringing about a

peaceful solution than Prussia; and it was quite possible that she would give up her demand if she saw Prussia prepared for any event. But the dangers would be no small ones if this hope should be deceived, if the war broke out again in the spring with redoubled fury, and Prussia, hard pressed by the French in Westphalia, became completely defenceless in Poland against the two Imperial Courts. And what if Austria—while the King was sacrificing himself, and entirely breaking off with France to save the Rhenish provinces—should come to terms with the Committee of Public Safety, and secure the assistance of France for her other plans, by ceding the left bank of the Rhine?

Alvensleben, therefore, utterly rejected the plans of Finkenstein. "We must try to make a separate peace with France," he wrote, "as quickly as possible and at any price; that we may not come into the horrible position of being on bad terms with the Imperial Courts without any resources, and on a still worse footing with France. The Imperial Courts will never forgive us the steps we have already taken; and France will not now, after the complete conquest of Holland, be inclined to lower her demands. Our pecuniary means will be exhausted by the end of March; we have neither credit abroad—as the ill success of the last loan shews—nor further resources at home, as the Minister of finance has plainly told us. Still less could we venture on raising a large number of men in our own country, for the feelings of the whole nation are so strongly opposed to the war, that a further persistence in it might shake even the tried fidelity of Prussian subjects. And the worst thing is, that we have always as much reason to fear the victories of our allies as the triumph of our enemies. In the present state of feeling on the part of the Imperial Courts, every success of Austria against the French would be a step to our destruction." He therefore came to the conclusion that the Prussian Government ought to accede to the views propounded by the Committee of Public Safety,

and at any rate pave the way for a Prusso-French alliance, by agreeing to the cession of the Prussian provinces on the Rhine, on condition that France would guarantee to the crown of Prussia all its territories, together with the acquisitions in Poland as far as the Vistula.

Alvensleben, as we see, advocated the very reverse of Finkenstein's system. The latter wished above all things to maintain the left bank of the Rhine; the chief desire of the former was to keep the land as far as the Vistula. The latter hoped to intimidate France; the former Austria. Both of them had to make up their minds, in case of failure, to a continuance of war, the latter with France, the former with Austria; both were obliged to confess, that in such a case, the Emperor on the one side, and the Republic on the other, would be a highly untrustworthy ally. All that Alvensleben, therefore, said about Prussia's exhaustion in money and troops, and the impossibility of carrying on the war any longer, served equally to refute his own opinions as those of Finkenstein.

To this was added an important factor—the personal feeling of the King. Ever since the Polish campaign he had been out of health and out of humour, and filled with the desire of repose. The vigour of his nature was completely broken; he would not enter upon any path which did not lead directly to a secure and speedy peace. But most of all he resolutely rejected all thoughts of a French alliance. The Revolution had disgusted him with the whole nation; he would not suffer any French cook at his court, nor any French dancer at his theatre; no advantage in the world could have allured him to make common cause with the Convention. Hostile and bitter, on the other hand, as were his relations to Austria, the King could not without difficulty contemplate an open breach with the Emperor. In direct contrast to Frederick II, but like most of his ancestors, his feelings were those of a Ghibelline and a Prince of the Empire; and in spite of all political strife

and jealousy he still retained in his heart a remnant of the old devotion towards the head of the Empire. Nor could he entirely break in feeling with the Empress Catharine, nor give up the idea that the good understanding between himself and her might somehow be restored. The sum of his wishes, therefore, was to withdraw as quickly as possible from the French war, without, however, breaking down the bridges to Vienna and St. Petersburg. At this time Count Haugwitz obtained the first place in his confidence by reducing these wishes of the monarch to diplomatic forms, and drawing up the necessary instructions for Golz in accordance with them.

Haugwitz, like the King, thought that the first necessity for Prussia was immediate peace on all hands. The French claim to the Rhine-land appeared very vexatious, but still not intolerable, to Prussia, if she received in return a suitable accession of territory and influence. He was not, therefore, in favour of flying out into a rage like Finkenstein, and breaking off the negotiations. But the proposal of Alvensleben appeared to him no less rash. Even if Prussia withdrew from the war, England and Austria would still remain in the field against the French, and it was possible, though not probable, that they might be victorious. In what a ridiculous position would Prussia then be, if she had given up her Cleves lands to France! The negotiator in Basle was accordingly instructed to declare that Prussia was astonished by the sudden lust of conquest betrayed by the French, but could at present give no decided answer on this point; that it was evident that the cession of the left bank of the Rhine could not be discussed in a separate treaty with Prussia, but must be left to the future general peace. The King, who found all his own opinions expressed in these sentences, signed the instructions drawn up for Golz on the 28th of January.

The character of this resolution is sufficiently clear. It was, indeed, somewhat better than the actual cession of the

Rhenish lands. But at the best it was and remained an act of pusillanimity, a resignation by Prussia of the position of a great and leading Power. It did not actually hand over the German border-lands to the French, but it declined to defend them with Prussian troops. Under the circumstances which now lie open before us, we can no longer speak of a breach of treaty with Austria, or of treachery to the Fatherland. After Austria had concluded an armed alliance with Russia against Prussia on the 3rd of January, it would have been worse than childish if she had expected farther help from Prussia against France. The German Empire, after having set on foot scarcely 20,000 men, besides the English mercenaries, during three years of war—after having expressed a wish for peace in the most suppliant terms—could no longer have any right to complain of the Basle negotiation. Where in fact was anything like political national feeling to be found at that time in Germany? It would have been an inversion of all historical justice to judge the peacemakers of Basle, or the Emperor Francis, by the standard of a national policy which as yet had no existence. But we must all the more decidedly repeat, that by adopting the system of Count Haugwitz, Prussia condemned herself to political nullity. Such an act of political suicide can never be justified; it can at best be excused by reasons of the most urgent nature. The question is whether such reasons existed in the position of affairs.

In such a connexion little attention ought to be paid to the financial and military exhaustion of the State. The exhaustion did exist, and was considerable enough to restrain the Government from taking part in any contest for foreign interests, however praiseworthy and useful it might be. But where her own existence was at stake, we may say that Prussia, since 1792, had not made a third part of the exertions by which France, in a single year, had emerged from utter impotence to take the lead in Europe.

The foreign relations of Prussia were in the highest degree complicated and pregnant with danger. Let us consider which of the many difficulties in which she was involved were the really decisive ones, or ought to have been so; we shall find two points for consideration, of which the one, and by far the more important, will serve as a justification, and the other as an impeachment, of Prussian policy.

The one was the well-founded suspicion, that when Prussia had quarrelled with France on account of the Rhenish frontier, Austria would not hesitate a moment to seek the friendship of the Committee of Public Safety by giving up the left bank. What was to become of Prussia, —weakened as she was by three years' war, at variance with Russia on account of Poland, cut off from all intercourse with England since the autumn—if she were to find herself opposed to the united power of the Emperor and the Republic? It is perfectly conceivable that the mere possibility of such a danger filled Count Alvensleben with terror, and inspired Count Haugwitz with the consciousness of courage, when he resisted at any rate the immediate cession of the Rhenish lands.

Thus the attitude of the Viennese cabinet forced the Prussian Government to peace at almost any price. On the other hand the aspect of French affairs no less urgently counselled firmness and audacity.

This was the time in which the trial of Barère, Billaud-Varennes, &c., daily strengthened the Moderate party, alienated the Independents more and more from the Jacobins, and roused public opinion more and more violently in favour of conservative principles and peace. In spite of all their victories, the French armies were in a miserable state of destitution. All that remained of them, after the enormous sacrifice of life during the former years, lived entirely on the resources of the conquered lands; France herself was, for a long time to come, unable to do anything for her own defenders. The immense majority of the population desired

peace, and when an orator in the Convention once began to speak of glory and conquest, the press and the people answered with execrations against war. It was absolutely incumbent on the Government to shew some result of the negotiation within a short time, if they did not wish to fall beneath the weight of public displeasure. One of the most sharp-sighted observers at that period was able to say: "If the Republic does not give the people peace in two months, the people will restore the Monarchy." These things were not, like the intrigues of Thugut, veiled in obscurity; they were open to the eyes of all Europe. Nothing was more important and urgent for the self-preservation of the Committee of Public Safety, than the conclusion of a treaty with Prussia without any further delay. If Alvensleben saw reasons enough to accede to every French demand for the sake of peace, the Committee had a far stronger impulse to accede to the Prussian conditions with the same object. The course of the negotiation will confirm this at every step. The withdrawal of Prussia from the Coalition was at this time a question affecting the very existence of the Republic; and we have not the slightest doubt that the French Government would have purchased this withdrawal even at the cost of evacuating the Rhenish lands.

We thus see the two negotiators in nearly the same position. Each of them is compelled, by circumstances over which he has no control, to yield, if the other remains firm. The question is which of the two is possessed of the sharper insight, the firmer will, the greater self-confidence; and it is with shame that we confess that the preponderance of these virtues was at that time on the side of the foreigners, and that the victory remained with the enemy, in the congress as well as in the battle-field.

Count Golz had his first official conference with Barthélemy on the 26th of January. He desired in the first place a cessation of arms during the negotiation; Barthelemy gave his consent, and begged the Committee for the necessary

powers. It is again characteristic of the position of both parties, that when this proposal was announced, instructions were sent simultaneously from Berlin and Paris, not to retard the matter by negotiations respecting a truce, but to come to a clear understanding on the question of peace as quickly as possible. If there was a fair prospect of the latter, the Committee declared itself ready to abstain from all further hostilities against the Prussian territory, and especially against the fortress of Wesel. On the Prussian side an understanding had been come to with Austria on the 29th of January, that in consequence of the loss of Holland, General Möllendorf should leave the Middle Rhine to the protection of the army of the Empire, and himself take up a position in Westphalia. The Committee had no sooner heard of this than they gave their full consent, promised not to disturb Möllendorf in any way, and offered to make a feigned attack upon Westphalia, if Prussia should need such a pretext to account for her movements to the Austrian cabinet. "We wish," wrote the Committee to Barthélemy, "to do everything to promote peace; and we reject the truce only because it would in all probability protract the final settlement."

Meanwhile the negotiation suffered an unexpected interruption from the death of Golz, who was unwell when he arrived in Basle, became seriously ill at the end of January, and died in a few days afterwards of a bilious fever. The Ministry commissioned Harnier for the present to carry on the conference, and it was he who received a despatch, on the 13th of February, containing the above-mentioned resolutions which the King had signed on the 28th of January. According to these he was to maintain that the cession of the left bank of the Rhine did not come within the scope of his negotiation, but must be left for discussion at the general peace. At most he was to concede, that the fact of the settlement of the boundaries being postponed to the

general peace should be mentioned in the treaty. It was to be wished that the Committee of Public Safety would bring forward a draft of the treaty of peace. Barthélemy without any hesitation expressed his assent to all these proposals. "We must try," he said, "to find a *mezzo termino* in order to postpone the frontier question." He must, however, he added, observe that an evacuation of the left Rhine by the French troops was not at present to be thought of. He was of opinion that, in order to prevent all collision, a fixed line of demarcation for the future neutral lands should be drawn on the right bank. Haugwitz entirely agreed, and was on his own part prepared to consent to the military occupation of the left bank until the peace. The way seemed paved to an understanding on all points.

In Paris, however, the intelligence of this turn of affairs excited much ill-humour among the French rulers. From Meyerink's former communication, and Harnier's speeches in Paris, they had confidently expected the express and immediate cession of the Rhenish lands. The reference to a general peace seemed to them no compensation, however emphatically the Prussian envoys might dwell on the future complaisance of their Government. Prussia, they said, would be bound by such hints only so long as her political interests coincided with them. Being well aware, therefore, of the longing for peace which prevailed in Berlin, they resolved to make one more attempt on the weakness of their opponent, and to force from him the desired concession by violent threats.

"Prussia," they wrote to Barthélemy on the 1st of March, "suddenly begins to raise difficulties; her disinclination to give up the conquered lands makes us doubt her sincerity; we recall our concession with respect to Wesel, and shall instruct our generals to be guided entirely by military considerations. The ambassadors at Basle were at first alarmed; but Barthélemy himself offered to protest against this

resolution, and Harnier sent word to Berlin that the threat was not seriously meant, if they only held their ground firmly. When the Ministers followed his advice and took no notice of the pretended warlike alarms, the Committee of Public Safety immediately drew in their horns. "The clouds," they wrote on the 11th, "which seemed to gather round the Prussian negotiations have been dispersed by Barthélemy's explanations." They sent to the ambassador the draft of the treaty which had been asked for by Prussia.

This document was drawn up as much as possible in accordance with the French views, but entirely on the principles hitherto laid down by Haugwitz. Peace and friendship were to be established between the Republic and the King, both as Prussian Monarch and as Elector and Estate of the Empire, and neither party was to give support to the enemies of the other, or grant them a passage through its territory. The French troops were to evacuate the Prussian lands on the right bank of the Rhine; but they were to continue to occupy the provinces of Prussia on the left bank. These last (*article* 6th) were to share the fate of the other lands of the Empire on the left bank, at the general peace. France consented (*article* 9th) to accept the mediation of the King in favour of those Estates of the Empire which were willing to enter into direct negotiation with the Republic. After these principal provisions came an additional clause, the acceptance of which, however, was not made an absolute condition of peace. "In order to bring our relations with Prussia," observed the Committee, "into harmony with our general system, we wish, in a secret article, to call upon Prussia, or rather to come to an agreement with Prussia, to join in an armed neutrality, or an open alliance, with Sweden, Denmark, and perhaps Holland." If Prussia were not inclined to do this, it was not to be insisted upon; and the immediate conclusion of peace was confidently expected. "This is our *ultimatum*," wrote the Committee on the 16th; "every delay would fill us with

vexation." And again, on the 19th: "Urge them to come to a settlement with all haste; the moments are precious; if we do not obtain the peace, every day is a loss of victories to our armies, which, had it not been for these negotiations, would have been long ago in wealthy countries, while they are now starving in exhausted lands."

Harnier's personal feelings would have led him to respond with zeal to the eagerness of the Committee. However, he was obliged to reply immediately, that Prussia could not for the present enter into those northern alliances, nor agree to the 6th article without a prospect of compensation. In the next place the King had, on the 20th of February, already appointed Hardenberg, the minister of the Franconian provinces, as successor to Count Golz, and it was necessary therefore to await his arrival in Basle. Hardenberg was a clever and highly educated man, of easy and stately manners, liberal opinions and lively temperament; his nature was without heroic greatness, but also without awkwardness or littleness; and though of a character unfitted to cope with the subsequent crises of his country, he was well adapted to the actual position of affairs, and far superior both to the Minister Haugwitz and the King in courage and vigour. He had already, in January, expressed his opinion regarding the peace to this effect; that it was essential for Prussia, even though Austria and England remained in the field, to reject all overtures for an alliance with France, and to confine herself to a firm neutrality, both for herself and the Estates of the Empire which coincided with her. Such a neutrality, he continued, was so useful and important to France, that, with a certain degree of firmness, it might be obtained without any sacrifice of territory; he therefore agreed entirely with Finkenstein, that the French demand of the left bank of the Rhine should be unconditionally and emphatically rejected. Holding these views, it was with great regret that he read the instructions which his Government gave him on his return to Basle. Haugwitz made a step in ad-

vance to meet the wishes of the French, by consenting to the ultimate cession of the Rhine lands on condition that Prussia should be compensated for her loss; and he only made it a condition that this concession should be recorded in a separate and secret article. Hardenberg was, if possible, to gain the consent of the French to the fixing of the Rhine as the line of demarcation; and if not, a line from Frankfort through Limburg, Altenkirchen and Elberfeld to the Ruhr and the Rhine; to reserve for Prussia a decided influence on the arrangement of German affairs at the general peace; and to endeavour to gain a suitable compensation for the house of Orange.

On his way through the Breisgau, Hardenberg received the French *ultimatum*. He immediately missed in this document the promise of a compensation for the territory which Prussia was hereafter to give up—the fixing of a line of demarcation—and the provision for the House of Orange. He therefore took the opportunity, on the 16th of March, of once more bringing the general principles of the treaty to the notice of his Government. "I should not like," he wrote, "to go beyond a secret article promising, in expressions as vague as possible, a friendly understanding respecting the question of frontiers. France has a paramount interest in separating us from the Coalition, and would, if she could not attain her object in any other way, make up her mind to accept such an *ultimatum*. It would certainly be advantageous to me if I had two strings to my bow, and could assume a threatening and warlike tone if the French did not agree to my proposals." This was no doubt the only proper and dignified course. But Alvensleben was furious. He was beside himself at this warlike tone, by which, he said, the simplest negotiation might be thrown into confusion. Haugwitz, too, thought that the 6th article was altogether favourable to Prussia, if it could be made a secret one, and the promise of a compensation could be ob-

tained. He also thought that the armed neutrality, proposed in the additional clause, would furnish the most convenient opportunity of attaching to it a demand of a line of demarcation. For Orange, he considered, they could only use their good offices, but not make the peace dependent on success. For Hardenberg's "second string," he concluded, they had no materials. Such was the answer sent to the ambassador.

Hardenberg was the more grieved at this weakness, because all that he learned in Basle confirmed the correctness of his views. All the intelligence he received from Paris went to prove the ardent longing of the nation for peace, the impossibility of laying further war-burdens on the country, and the rise of the Moderate and Royalist parties. Bachez, Secretary of the French Embassy, sent him a hint not to be in a hurry, for that France in a few weeks would become more compliant. Though prevented by his Government from turning this position of affairs to the best account, he determined at any rate to do his utmost. In his first conference with Barthélemy (March 21st), in which he brought forward the Prussian draft of the treaty, he once more made a demand for a preliminary truce, saying that, after the claim preferred by France to the Rhenish lands, the negotiation might perhaps be prolonged for a considerable time. Barthélemy said that France would insist upon the Rhine frontier at all hazards; but that she was prepared to make every other concession, such as secret articles and lines of demarcation, and that he would refer to his Government respecting the truce. The Committee of Public Safety received his intelligence with extreme vexation. "What," cried they (March 25th), "more delays? We adhere to our 6th article without any secret paragraphs; we will grant no truce—we must come to some decision." Four days afterwards, however, a further report came from Barthélemy that Hardenberg maintained his ground, and that he would either allow no mention of the left bank of the

Rhine at all, or only in a secret article, with a firm guarantee of compensation to Prussia; whereupon the Committee resolved to retreat another step, and to consent to the Prussian demands. Meanwhile, however, Hardenberg had made a new claim. The French *ultimatum* accepted the intercession of the King for those Estates of the Empire which were willing to enter into direct negotiation with the Republic. Hardenberg now represented that Austria would use every means of preventing this separate treaty of Prussia from being virtually extended into a peace with the Empire. He declared, therefore, that it was indispensable to hold out to the princes of the Empire some immediate advantage, and proposed, as an addition to the 9th article, that France should promise not to treat as an enemy, for the three succeeding months, any Estate of the Empire on the East of the Rhine which should claim the intercession of Prussia. At this the Committee of Public Safety became seriously angry. "To suspicious eyes," they wrote to Barthélemy, "Hardenberg might appear in the light of a Minister of the Coalition. This addition is entirely inadmissible. It would render it impossible for us to carry on the war on the right bank of the Rhine. For every Sovereign of the Empire whom our troops attacked would immediately claim the intercession of Prussia, and thereby protect himself from us for a whole quarter of a year. Our patience is at an end; we will have no more delay; we demand an unconditional *yes*, or an immediate *no*" (March 30th). Before this despatch arrived in Basle, the ambassadors in that city had come to an agreement on the main point—the wording of the articles in respect to the Rhenish lands. It was arranged that the French troops should remain in possession of the King's provinces on the left bank of the Rhine, and that the final settlement respecting them should be postponed to the conclusion of peace with the Empire. A secret article then declared that if the Empire should give up the left bank of the Rhine to the Republic, the King would

treat with the latter respecting the cession of his provinces in that quarter, in return for a territorial compensation hereafter to be agreed upon. With respect to the line of demarcation, the chief objection of the French was that Hanover would thereby be protected, and that no honest neutrality could be expected from the Elector of that country. Whereupon Hardenberg answered for the willingness of his Court to take military possession of Hanover, in case of need, and thereby secure its neutrality. Meanwhile the Committee of Public Safety, on the 31st, had repeated its consent to Hardenberg's secret articles. This document arrived in Basle on the 4th of April, and as Hardenberg adhered immoveably to his additional clause, Barthélemy resolved, in spite of the despatch of the 30th, to make this concession on his own responsibility. The peace was then signed on the 5th of April. On the 9th, the Committee of Public Safety declared, indeed, that the condition had been accepted contrary to their express instructions, but that it was not sufficiently important to induce them to deprive France of the advantages of a peace so important to the whole of Europe, and thereupon gave their sanction to the treaty.

Hardenberg was in some measure reconciled to the whole affair by the trifling success which he had gained in the course of the negotiation. Like the Committee of Public Safety he laid especial weight on the last additional clause; he hoped, as a result of it, that the whole Empire would in a short time become neutral, and be thereby withdrawn from Austrian influence. The satisfaction of the Ministers was still greater, for they had for weeks past made up their minds to the loss of the left bank of the Rhine, and indulged in the prospect of a stately compensation for Prussia. They shared in Hardenberg's hope that the great majority of the Sovereigns of the Empire would join them; and they saw in other parts of Europe, too, a growing inclination for a general peace. In Madrid, Alcudia declared to the Prussian

ambassador that his Court would not hesitate for a moment to follow the example of Prussia, as soon as the latter had come to a settlement with France. In Basle a Venetian statesman had communicated to Hardenberg, that he had been commissioned by the King of Sardinia to claim the mediation of Prussia for a peace with France. The King himself, he said, regarded a separate treaty as somewhat hazardous, but the Princes and Ministers urged him to it with so much zeal that he could no longer resist, but was ready to agree to a peace on the *status quo ante*. Barthélemy, with whom Hardenberg held a preliminary discussion on the subject, declared that his Government would gladly enter into the negotiation, and that as they could not well give back Savoy, which had been once for all incorporated, they would gladly compensate the King by giving him Milan as soon as it should have been taken from the Austrians. Still more important seemed the course of affairs at this moment in Paris, where, ever since the 12th of Germinal, the Moderate party had more and more consolidated its power, and where its leaders began openly to advocate the evacuation of the left bank of the Rhine. Hardenberg, who was employed in Basle in settling the particulars of the line of demarcation with Barthélemy, reported, on the 20th of April, that he had the most trustworthy information respecting the views of the Moderate party; that the latter would conclude a peace with Sardinia as well as Prussia on the *status quo ante*, if the two States would then enter into an alliance with France; that it was, therefore, above all things necessary that Prussia should immediately take in hand the negotiation of a peace with the Empire on the basis of the additional articles agreed to in Basle; and that she should, without any circumlocution, propose to treat according to the *status quo ante*. He held several discussions with Barthélemy on this point, and the French statesman, although extremely reserved with respect to the views of his Govern-

ment, clearly shewed that he himself, and the members of his party in Paris, agreed with Hardenberg, and were fully impressed with the advantage to France of a genuine, *i. e.* a disinterested, policy of peace.

Once more the Prussian Government indulged the hope of developing the treaty of Basle into a general peace, and yet retaining the whole of the territory of the Empire.

BOOK XII.

END OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL CONVENTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONSTITUTIONALISTS.

THE NATION IS ALIENATED FROM THE CONVENTION AND HATES THE JACOBINS. DECREE FOR DISARMING THE TERRORISTS.—RESTITUTION OF THE PROPERTY OF PERSONS WHO HAD BEEN EXECUTED.—TRADE IN GOLD AND SILVER.—PROPERTY OF THE PARENTS OF EMIGRÉS.—TREATY OF PEACE WITH THE CHOUANS.—COMMISSION APPOINTED TO PREPARE A NEW CONSTITUTION.—THE COMMITTEES ENDEAVOUR TO CHECK THE REACTION. REPORT OF THE 1ST OF MAY.—POLITICAL MURDERS IN THE SOUTH.—THE MOUNTAIN PREPARES A REVOLT.—RISING OF 1 PRAIRIAL.—REVOLT IN TOULON.—ENTIRE DEFEAT OF THE JACOBIN PARTY.—SPREAD OF ROYALIST SENTIMENTS.—THE CONSTITUTION-COMMITTEE DISCUSS THE ELEVATION OF LOUIS XVII. TO THE THRONE.—HIS LIFE IN PRISON AND DEATH.

THE victory of the 12th of Germinal was a fresh encouragement to the mass of the French people to sweep away every remnant and trace of the Reign of Terror. In a thousand directions, in social as well as political life, this tendency shewed itself. The republican *toi* fell into disuse; the Carmagnole and the *Ça ira*, were no more heard even in the *cabarets* of the lowest classes; even the first war-song of the Revolution, the Marseillaise, had been rendered infamous by the Jacobins, and was no longer allowed in public places. No one would have any thing to do with the republican week; the Decades were ridiculed, the old Sunday was everywhere kept, and the citizens attended in throngs at the Christian services. In February the Convention, as we have seen, had proclaimed full liberty for every kind of private worship, but they still forbade all public religious services, and

especially the use of the churches. But in numberless Communes, neither the people nor the authorities paid any attention to this decree; and if ever a zealous official wished to proceed against an ecclesiastic, the citizens told him that they had compelled their priest to perform the service; that they, too, were part of the Sovereign People, and knew that resistance to every kind of tyranny was the sacred duty of the citizen. The Communes invariably gave the preference to the non-juring priests; naturally enough, because these had proved the conscientiousness of their convictions by their endurance of a deadly persecution, while a number of abandoned rabble had found their way into the ranks of the constitutional clergy. It was openly declared on all hands that the ecclesiastical property must be restored, at any rate so far as to cover the expenses of the cure of souls and of public worship. The time was gone when the people hated and feared the clergy as a powerful order of the *ancien régime;* they now only remembered the vulgar outrages of the Jacobins against all which had been held sacred by the people for a thousand years. Even now the peasants had no intention of paying the tithes, but they wished for true baptism, ecclesiastical marriage, and Christian burial. Their feelings towards the nobility underwent a similar change. No one thought that a restoration of their political and feudal privileges, or a revival of the old Parliaments, was within the bounds of possibility. But the sting of their former hatred—the abhorrence of the traitorous *Émigrés*—had entirely lost its sharpness. How could it be otherwise after the frightful persecutions of the last two years? The number of fugitives had swelled to such a degree, that the chevaliers of Coblenz formed scarcely a tenth of the whole mass. Since that time Constitutionalists and Girondists, Merchants and Peasants, Royalists and Republicans, had escaped by hundreds and thousands across the frontier from the dagger and axe of the Jacobins, and had no other desire than to return to their country under any constitution whatsoever. Things

had been carried so far, that in innumerable cases the caprice of the rulers had entered long lists of names in the category of *Émigrés* whose owners had remained without interruption in France. A number of soldiers who were fighting for the Republic on the frontier were in this case; the property of their parents had been put under sequestration, and their families pined away in the bitterest poverty. In spite of the overthrow of terrorism, the laws against the *Émigrés*, as we have seen, were still in force; and at the end of 1794 the Convention renewed them in all their severity by a new decree. But no one could be any longer found to carry them into execution. The fugitives returned from all quarters to their homes; the local authorities without ceremony struck them out of the list, or shut their eyes to their presence. In most places a stricter course of proceeding would have been dangerous to the public peace, so decidedly was public sympathy on the side of the persecuted. The citizens by energetic threats hindered all information or judicial measures, and not unfrequently chose those who returned from banishment to some public office. Under these circumstances the sale of the property of the *Émigrés* which had been confiscated to the State, came to a stand-still in most of the Departments; every one said that it was a shame to keep it back any longer from the rightful owners, provided that they had never borne arms against France. We know that the finances of the Republic mainly depended upon these confiscations, since it was only by their sale that the course of the *assignats* could be maintained: this attitude of the citizens, therefore, was extremely vexatious to the Convention, as they saw in it not merely neglect of their laws but a certain source of bankruptcy. The population troubled themselves very little about this; to the immense majority it was a matter of the greatest indifference what the temper of the Convention might be. They supported it, indeed, against the Jacobins, but certainly not from reverence for the former, but simply from hatred

towards the latter. Generally speaking, the republican government had fallen into the greatest discredit, and no resolution was more popular in the country than that of the 21st of March, which announced the drawing up of a new Constitution. That the latter would not be Jacobin in its character might, in the present state of affairs, be foretold with certainty; the only concern of the citizens was that *new* men should at last succeed to power—honourable, educated and law-loving men, instead of the unclean and furious demagogues, who by their rude and vulgar quarrels daily undermined the authority of the Government and the foundations of the State. The press and the literature of the day made no concealment of these sentiments: the majority of journals and pamphlets spoke with open contempt or hostile distrust of the republican form of government. Something must be done, they said, to get out of this endless surging of party feuds, and to reach firm ground; they must have an independent, firm, and lasting government. It was, they said, an advantage of monarchy that it imparted its own steadiness to all public relations, and thereby afforded the best guarantee for civil freedom; the constitution of 1791 had, in their opinion, only failed of its objects, because the distrust against the King had too greatly crippled the power of the Government. In Paris, artisans and workmen were heard discussing the question, whether corn had been as rare, and bread as dear, under the Monarchy as under the Republic; and the saying went the round of the *Jeunesse dorée* that 8 and 9 made 17—in other words that the Revolution of '89 must end with the coronation of Louis XVII.

When such sentiments were expressed in the Convention, the republican feelings of the members blazed forth, and the Independents, especially, and a few enthusiasts of the Gironde, angrily cried out, that in their struggle with the Terrorists they must not forget their contest with the monarchy. For the present, however, they were too deeply implicated in the Jacobin troubles; they had too many incomplete and

urgent problems of restoration to solve, and above all they possessed too little internal energy for resistance against public opinion, to allow of the majority of the Convention being forced so easily from their present course. Even though a trace of monarchical sentiment might be found here and there among quiet citizens, it was well known that it only sprung from a longing after lasting repose, and was on that very account not likely to lead to violent measures. Though many a disrespectful word against the Convention might be heard among them, their favour might yet be gained by honest endeavours to heal the wounds of the Reign of Terror. The main point was, however, that the Convention had no other allies and props than the *Jeunesse dorée* and the orderly citizens; that it had to fear the worst from the Jacobins; and that it was a matter of life and death to prevent a repetition of the 12th of Germinal. With this view the Committee of Public Safety, whose members were sinking under the weight of business, was increased on the 3rd of April to sixteen persons. On the 10th they had recourse to a measure which had been often demanded by the Parisian Sections, but had hitherto been always refused by the suspicious Convention; they gave orders for a general disarming of all those citizens, who had in any way taken part in the tyranny of the Reign of Terror. The Communes, and, in Paris, the Sections, were to undertake this office. While the Convention hoped in this way to render the Jacobins powerless, they endeavoured to strengthen the more wealthy and moderate classes, by decreeing a new organization of the Parisian National Guard, in accordance with the principles of 1791. They followed these principles also in the administration of the country; the law of the 4th of December, 1793, was renewed, and the authority which the Departments and Districts had possessed in 1791 was now restored to them. Even now, however, they did not dare to restore the power of election to the people, but

retained it for the present in the hands of the Committees and Commissioners of the Convention.

As the Convention thus made common cause with the citizens, it was natural that the question of the grand restoration of rights and property should be brought forward with redoubled earnestness. After the revolt of the Girondists, many hundreds of their adherents had been proscribed as Federalists in the summer and autumn of 1793. As, then, the Convention had acknowledged the leaders of this party as champions of the good cause, and recalled as many of them as were still alive to their seats, it would have been an absurdity to prosecute any longer the inferior victims of the 31st of May. On the 11th of April, therefore, all the proscriptions connected with that day were recalled, and at the same time the tyrannical law of the 10th of March, 1793 —which outlawed all enemies of the Revolution without any closer definition of the term—was repealed. Four days afterwards Johannot renewed his great motion for striking out the word "confiscation" from the criminal law of France, and for restoring the property of executed persons to their families. He pointed out that the victims of the Reign of Terror had for the most part been murdered without any legal procedure; that the blood of the innocent clove to these possessions of the nation; that the credit of the State could only be saved by a radical act of purification and atonement. The feeling of the majority was so favourable that the motion was immediately carried amidst clapping of hands. But scruples soon arose. Rewbell cried out that it was wrong to pass so important a decree in a rash fit of enthusiasm; he said that a number of very important interests had to be considered, unless everything was to be sacrificed to the advantage of the Royalists. Some of the Thermidorians, who were offended by the movement in favour of the Church, came to his aid, and the majority agreed to another postponement. On the 18th Rewbell renewed his opposition. In quiet times, he allowed, confiscation was

unjust, because it visited the sins of the criminal upon his innocent family. But in times of Revolution, in times of political party strife, it was the duty of the victor to render the successors of the conquered incapable of renewing the contest. Even Johannot, he said, had conceded that the *Émigrés* ought to be distinguished from the persons executed, and to be treated as public enemies of the country according to martial law; but then he could not deny that a considerable portion of the executed had been in a state of open rebellion, and, like the *Émigrés*, had borne arms against the Republic. Rewbell demanded, therefore, that the sale of the property of *Émigrés* should be first of all completed, and that the Convention should then come to some fixed resolution respecting the property of the parents of *Émigrés:* and when this had been done, and not till then, should the question of the property of the persons executed be taken into consideration.

The Convention wavered. Whoever appealed with vigour to their dislike of *Émigrés* and monarchy seldom failed to produce an effect on the great mass of members. A resolution was passed that the Committees should first bring up a report on the property of parents of *Émigrés*. But immediately afterwards, the feelings of the Convention were once more changed by a communication from the *Comité de Sûreté générale* that a new Jacobin plot had been discovered; that on the morrow, or on the day after, several columns were to break out of the Faubourg St. Antoine, overpower the arsenal and the Government Committees, and liberate the imprisoned patriots. This led to violent outbreaks of anger against the incorrigible Terrorists, and turned the current of feeling, which had set in towards the Left, back again towards the Right. When, in addition to this, Jacobin tumults were reported from several provinces, the more pressing fear of the men of terror banished all other apprehensions, and the views of the moderate party once more gained

the upper hand. On the 25th of April a law was adopted almost without discussion, which opened the Bourse again, and allowed the trade in gold and silver; and the motion of the Left—to connect with this new law at any rate some measures to prevent *accaparement* and usury—fell to the ground without discussion, amidst the murmurs of the majority. This was a point on which, as we know, the communistic tendencies of the Reign of Terror laid the greatest possible stress; so summary a settlement of it, therefore, was highly characteristic of the change in the position of affairs, and in the feelings of the country.

On the same day the Convention began the discussion respecting the parents of *Émigrés*, according to Rewbell's motion. We have already mentioned that during the height of the Terror the Convention had put the possessions of all those citizens whose sons had emigrated under sequestration, on the ground that they had probably aided in the crime of their sons, and that the nation must secure the future inheritance of the *Émigrés*. A number of innocent families were hereby reduced to complete destitution, and had ever since lived as beggars on the support of their Communes, or the charity of the State. The proposed law did not even now venture to proceed on the simple principle that no one ought to suffer for the crimes of another, and that it was therefore an insane and criminal act to confiscate an estate because it might one day belong to an *Émigré*. It only ordered that the *Émigré's* share should be separated from every mass of property of this sort, and definitively confiscated; it further ordained that the residue should be restored to the *Ascendant;* and decided, to the great disgust and anger of the Left, that in fixing the inheritance of the *Émigrés* a considerable *praecipuum* [1] should be secured to the father.

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[1] This term may be thus explained. A Father, *e. g.* has 4 sons, and property worth 40,000 francs. One son emigrates. His future inheritance

Parallel with this discussion, both in time and tendency, ran the discussion on the goods of executed persons. Several Girondists—Doulcet, Louvet, Lanjuinais—who had experienced in their own persons the horrors of the Reign of Terror, strained every nerve to force the Convention to a resolution in complete accordance with justice and morality. But they had no easy task. For although they were supported by the whole weight of public opinion, which made itself heard by the rulers in a thousand imperious voices, yet their patriotic efforts were checked by the most painful of all anxieties in the heart of the Convention—the anxiety respecting the preservation of the sole income of the State—the anxiety respecting the credit of the *assignats*, the security for which would be diminished one-third, and perhaps one-half, by the desired restoration. It struck, too, at the root of the principles of the Independents, to declare, as was here done, that the Revolution was limited in its aggressive omnipotence by respect for a private right. Rewbell and his party left nothing undone, if not to prevent the passing of the decree, at any rate to blunt its point—to save, if not the property, at any rate the principle. It came at last to a law, on the 3rd of May, which maintained the punishment of confiscation against *Émigrés*, forgers of *assignats*, and traitorous generals, but ordered that the goods of all persons executed for political offences since the 10th of March, 1793, should be restored to their families. And thus the Moderate party at last succeeded in closing this frightful wound; and though the Left had for the moment successfully defended the revolutionary principle, yet, thanks to Lanjuinais' and Doulcet's efforts, the principle was condemned,

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would be 10,000 fr., and this is to be sequestrated. But now the law directs first, that 8,000 fr. should be set aside for the father (the *ascendant*) as *praecipuum*; there remain 32,000 fr., and the future share of the sons is 8,000 each. This portion of the *Émigré* son is to be confiscated, the residue paid back to the father.

for all future time, to barrenness. The immorality of confiscation was acknowledged throughout Europe by the public conscience from that time forward.

The Moderate party regarded it as a triumph of no less importance, that during the same weeks the work of reconciliation in the Western provinces was brought to a conclusion. In La Vendée the provisions of the treaty of La Jaunais were carried out for the moment without any hindrance. Charette appeared in person in Nantes, was received with distinction by the republican authorities, and greeted by the population with loud applause, in spite of his white cockade. Since that time he had lived in quiet retirement in his head-quarters at Belleville; and as the Conventional commissioners had allowed the peasants of the Marais to manage their internal affairs as they pleased, all traces of deadly opposition were obliterated for the moment from those regions. Stofflet, who had at first obstinately rejected the peace of La Jaunais, found himself daily deserted by his followers, and more and more hard pressed by the collected forces of Canclaux; and he agreed at last, on the 2nd of May, to a treaty at St. Florent, by which he accepted the same conditions as Charette, and thereby restored peace throughout the whole of La Vendée. The pacification of the Chouans in Bretagne continued to present greater difficulties. After General Humbert's zeal had succeeded in entering into negotiation with them, as described above, the conferences had, indeed, been continued, and gradually extended to most of the important chiefs. But, on the one hand, there was no permanent and supreme Commander-in-chief, as in La Vendée; on the contrary, Cormatin's authority was found at every step to be extremely insecure, and an effectual treaty, therefore, really needed a special negotiation with every single leader. On the other hand, General Hoche persisted in his opinion that the Chouans were not in earnest about the peace, and were only trying to gain time until the landing of the *Émigrés* took place. He accordingly

shewed himself utterly unyielding and reserved during the negotiation, sent warning after warning to the Committee of Public Safety, and expressed the bitterest indignation at the blind credulity of the Conventional commissioners. Things went so far that the Committee threatened him with their decided displeasure, and at last took from him half his command, confining him to the army of Brest (Southern Bretagne), and entrusting the army of Cherbourg (Western Normandy) to General Aubert-Dubayet. Now, for the first time, the Conventional commissioners made sufficient progress to conclude a formal treaty with Cormatin and 22 other chiefs of Chouans. This took place on the 20th of April at La Mabilais, on exactly the same conditions as had been granted in La Vendée.

The Moderate party, which, in addition to these healing measures at home, had just then completed the Prussian treaty, and begun a negotiation with Spain, indulged the hope of approaching the desired goal—a general pacification and reconciliation, and the close of the revolution by a universal peace. No doubt the work of the new Constitution formed the central point of all these efforts; and in this, too, essential progress was made at this time. On the 18th of April Cambacérès brought up the report of the commission on the organic laws, in which, for the purpose, as he alleged, of fixing the order of their labours, he endeavoured to shew the extent of the necessary reforms, and the necessity of a new Constitution, instead of that of 1793. No opposition was raised from any side: it was resolved to increase the numbers of the commission to eleven members, and to elect them on the 23rd. Siéyès had possessed such a decided reputation since 1789, as a genuine artist in constitutional matters—he had become, at that time, so undoubtedly the leader of the Independents—that his name was on this occasion the first to proceed from the electoral urn. He was, however, too proud to share his glory with ten others, or, perhaps, he just now preferred his practical activity in the

Committee of Public Safety; at any rate he declined to co-operate. Cambacérès too, and Merlin of Douay, who were also members of the Committee, came to the same decision. The following were then elected into the Constitutional commission—Thibaudeau, Laréveillère, Lesage, Boissy d'Anglas, Creuzé-Latouche, Louvet, Daunou, Berlier, Lanjuinais, Durand-Maillane and Baudin of the Ardennes. The Moderates and the Girondists had a considerable majority; and Daunou, Berlier and Laréveillère, were among the most thoughtful and enlightened of the Independents.

The Left was little contented with this result, or indeed with anything that had taken place during the last few weeks. Though France might in this way be journeying towards a calmer future, the present had its dark side for the Convention. Johannot, Boissy d'Anglas and Lanjuinais, were indeed praised by every body as the authors of the restoration of property; but the dislike felt towards the Convention as a whole contrasted all the more strongly with the praise awarded to these individuals. No one felt any love or respect for an assembly which had made itself, during a whole year, the passive and silent tool of the most horrible tyranny, and which even now had not purified itself from a number of execrated members. The government of the Committees was rendered weak and wavering by the constant change of persons and party influences. It had no money for any department of the public service; for the preservation of obedience and order, it had neither the National guard of Lafayette, nor the disciplined mobs of Henriot—and the troops were far away on the frontiers; the government, therefore, was driven helplessly to and fro by every breath of public opinion. In the Committee of Public Safety, and the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, the majority were at that time Independents,—Jacobins at the bottom of their hearts, who had always regarded as the principal criterion of liberty, the suppression of all their enemies. They saw with concealed fury the unpunished return of *Émigrés*, and

the open appearance of non-juring priests; they therefore carried a decree through the Convention on the 25th of April, that no one could be struck out of the list of *Émigrés* except by a resolution of the Convention. They were no less angry at the ingenuous newspaper articles, which daily spoke of the virtues of Louis XVI. and the sins of his murderers. Sometimes they took courage and caused a royalist writer to be incarcerated: but then a storm was raised in twenty newspapers, and the *Jeunesse dorée* clamoured for the freedom of the press or death, until the Committee yielded with peaceful prudence, and allowed the prisoners to go free. The law for disarming the Terrorists had caused the greatest excitement in Paris; the Sections were filled with personal quarrels, the threatened Jacobins overwhelmed the *Comité de Sûreté générale* with urgent petitions for protection against the furious wrath of their fellow citizens. The latter waited until the reorganization of the National guard should be completed—until they had got weapons in their hands; but then vengeance for the atrocities of the last year was at once to strike the guilty. Still more unfavourable was the intelligence from the Departments, especially of the South; the Conventional commissioners unanimously reported from all quarters, that the population would take the matter into their own hands, if the Convention did not take speedy measures on a large scale for the punishment of the monstrous crimes committed since 1793. Thibaudeau himself, although thoroughly converted from his former democratic views, and a prominent leader of the Moderate party, considered the continuance of such an anarchical state of affairs intolerable, and surprised the Convention by proposing, that, until the introduction of the new Constitution, all the powers of government should be once more centred in the Committee of Public Safety. The Jacobin members loudly applauded him, but the majority of his friends cried out against such a tendency to despotism. Lanjuinais declared on this occasion, to the deep indignation

of the entire Left, that no satisfactory state of things could be expected until the Executive was separated from the Legislative power, and the latter entrusted to two distinct bodies. Before, however, a decision was come to on this point, Chenier, in the name of the Committees, brought up a report, on the 1st of May, on the condition of the country, in which he laid before the Assembly, in a threatening tone, all the above mentioned complaints of the weakness of the officials, the audacity of the press, the priests, and the *Émigrés*. "They demand," he said, "day after day, as a high privilege of freedom, the right of praising despotism; treacherous manifestoes in favour of royalty are sown broadcast through Dauphiné and Bretagne; Lyons is sullied by several political murders; great energy is necessary to save the Republic." Hereupon it was decreed that all returned *Émigrés* and refractory priests should be immediately arrested, all royalist publications criminally prosecuted, and their authors banished; and that the disarming of the Terrorists should take place under the *surveillance* of the *Comité de Sûreté générale*. It was in vain that Tallien endeavoured to protect the press against restrictions; the Convention was evidently influenced by the fear of the reaction, and passed one article of the law after another. One proposition alone, which threatened every breach of the February law respecting the churches with imprisonment, was successfully opposed by Thibaudeau and Lanjuinais, who energetically reminded the Assembly of the feeling in La Vendée.

The direction which the Committees had given to the majority on this day was maintained for a while by a melancholy piece of intelligence from the South. We must call to mind how the myrmidons of Robespierre and Hébert had raged in Lyons, Marseilles, Avignon, Orange, Toulon and Arles—in which cities not a single family existed which had not been mulcted in blood or property — before we can understand the glow of fury with which the people now saw the bloody myrmidons of those tyrants living in impunity

and enjoying the fruits of their monstrous deeds. Only a few of them had been arrested, and even now their conviction by regular process of law was uncertain, and at any rate not to be rapidly obtained. And thus the ferment continued and increased; political intrigues were connected with it, and the returning *Émigrés* formed a channel for frequent communications with the exiled Princes. In the course of the spring armed bands were formed, first in Lyons, and soon in a hundred parts of the country, which called themselves companies of Jesus, of Jehu, or of the Sun, and arbitrarily took upon themselves the office of punishment. The members of Collot-d'Herbois' and Maignet's commissions, the blood-hounds of the terrorising police, the members of the old Revolutionary committees, were no longer secure of their lives. In Lyons people called out in the street, in the open day, after a passer by: "Stop the Mathevon!" (*i. e.* the Jacobin): and these words were sufficient to have him seized and stabbed, or thrown into the river. On the 5th of May a notorious spy of Collot's police stood before the tribunal, and the people demanded a sentence of death against him without delay. When the judges adhered to the legal forms, the mob broke out into mutiny, slew the accused, and then rushed with unbridled lust of revenge to the prison. The armed force was not numerous, and had no steady leaders; the people stormed the entrance, and murdered ninety-seven imprisoned Terrorists in a transport of tumultuous fury. The Representative Boissel appeared on the scene of blood when all was over: the people surrounded him with protestations of their good intentions, themselves related what had happened, eagerly described to him what infamous murderers the slaughtered men had been, and complained bitterly of the troops which had tried to hinder them. No less horrible scenes took place, on the 11th, in Aix, where the people likewise broke open the prison and cut down thirty prisoners without mercy—on this occasion under the very eyes of the Conventional commissioner

Chambon, who with feeble words exhorted them to obey the law, but in his heart sympathised with the furious multitude. It was natural that such proceedings should be turned to account in Paris in favour of the Jacobins, and against the Royalists and *Émigrés*. On the 10th of May the powers of the Committee of Public Safety were considerably enlarged, though not to the extent which Thibaudeau had proposed. They now proceeded to take strong measures against the licence of the press, and paid no regard to any protests. The fact that the citizens in several Sections passed resolutions in favour of the freedom of the press, was an additional reason for the Committee to delay the equipment of the National guard. The disarming of the Terrorists came to a complete stand-still; the *Comité de Sûreté générale* decided in favour of every remonstrance of accused Terrorists, and the Convention had no ears for the complaint of the Sections that this wholesome law was not carried out. When the Committee of Public Safety read the report from Lyons, they thought the companies of Jesus more dangerous, after all, to their own existence than all the Jacobins. These Rulers, for the most part entirely destitute of moral convictions or political principles, and driven by circumstances sometimes to the Right and sometimes to the Left, had at last no other object than to keep possession of power and its enjoyments for themselves, and therefore made use alternately of each of the contenting parties against the other. On the 12th of Germinal they had controlled the Terrorists by means of the citizens, who were mostly of royalist opinions; they now spared and protected the remnant of the Jacobins for the approaching contest with the Royalists.

But it was not allowed them to move on in the same direction for any length of time without interruption.

The dearness of provisions, which we have already noticed as prevailing in the winter, still continued, and could not, in the very nature of things, be mitigated before the arrival

of harvest. On the contrary, as foreign trade was greatly impeded by the war, the deficiency in the supplies was more and more painfully felt with every month of continued consumption. In May the Parisian authorities found it impossible to procure for the population the daily rations of one, or one pound and a half of bread, which were fixed in March; and they were glad when they were able to supply half a pound of rice in addition to half a pound of bread. The misery of the lower classes, therefore, was great, and the suggestions of the Jacobins once more gained a hearing in their old dominion, the Faubourgs. The extreme Left of the Convention had indeed been conquered and decimated on the 12th of Germinal, but by no means annihilated or changed in its sentiments. Its members looked on with savage fury at the successes of the Moderate party during April, and felt a malicious joy on seeing the apprehensions which the Convention entertained of the Royalists during the first weeks of May. When the Committees of that time began to protect the Jacobins from being disarmed, and from other acts of oppression, the members of the Mountain were very far removed from any feeling of gratitude; but they immediately conceived the idea of making use of the favourable moment, and, while free action was still allowed them, trying to regain their power by a bold *coup de main*. The Deputies Goujon and Bourbotte are said to have been the most active leaders of the undertaking; Thuriot and Cambon, who had escaped from imprisonment after the 12th of Germinal, worked in the same direction in the Faubourgs. The distress among the workmen afforded them plenty of inflammable materials; the murderous scenes in the South, and the threats of the Parisian citizens, inspired them with a consciousness of a just cause; and the open discord which had broken out between the Government and the Metropolitan sections, on account of the fresh favour shewn to the Jacobins, gave the latter the hope of overpowering the isolated Convention, in the first place, and then, by the help of its decrees, the

citizens themselves. The plan was similar to that of the 12th of Germinal—*viz.* to interrupt the sitting of the Convention by a noisy petition for bread, the Constitution of 1793, and the liberation of the patriots; then to disperse the hostile majority of the Assembly, constitute the Left as the only genuine representatives of the nation, and while other columns of the people were storming the Hôtel de Ville and the Arsenal, to dissolve the present Government and renew the system of 1793. The Jacobins found such masses of the men of the Faubourgs ready to rise, that they ventured to print and publish the plan of the insurrection on the 19th of May. In the afternoon there were riots in several streets, where the insurgents proclaimed the contest of the *Sansculottes* against the *Honnêtes gens*, and the galleries of the Convention disturbed the proceedings by unruly cries and violent clapping of hands, at every utterance of a Jacobin orator.

Early on the morning of the 20th of May (1st of Prairial), before 5 o'clock, the noise of drums and the clanking of the alarm bell began to summon the insurgents of the Faubourgs to arms. The Government Committees immediately assembled, and towards 8 o'clock ordered the *rappel* to be beaten in the other Sections of the city, to assemble the National Guard. When the sitting of the Convention began, three hours later, things were tolerably quiet in the environs of the Tuileries, but the galleries were filled with crowds of women, who by their cries and laughter rendered all discussion impossible. The servants of the Convention could do nothing to stop them, the armed force of the Sections would not assemble, and the *Jeunesse dorée* deliberated in the *cafés* of the Palais Royal, which were the worst Jacobins, the members of the Committee of Public Safety, or the workmen of the Faubourg St. Antoine. The President at last entrusted the chief command of the defenders of the Convention to a Brigadier-General who happened to be present; and the latter furnished half a dozen young men

with hunting whips, whereupon the galleries were cleared amidst discordant howlings. During this tumult the first crowd of armed workmen appeared at the principal entrance of the Hall, broke down the gates and filled the floor of the Convention; a few Deputies rushed forward to meet them, a company of gendarmes came up to protect the Representatives, and the insurgents were driven out at the point of the sword. But this was only the beginning of troubles. The tocsin was sounding in all quarters, the noise in the Place du Carousel increased every minute, and as yet only a weak battalion from one Section had arrived to occupy the entrances to the Hall of assembly. Towards 4 o'clock the insurgents again broke in in increased numbers; a fight took place at the door of the Hall itself, the National Guard was overpowered by gun shots, and the mass of assailants rushed over the body of the Deputy Féraud (who had desperately thrown himself in their way), into the lower part of the House, and surrounding the bureau of the President endeavoured to force from him the desired decrees. Boissy d'Anglas, who occupied the chair on this day as eputy of the old and weak Vernier, remained firm and immoveable, though pale as death. The people loaded him with abuse, threatened him with their fists and bayonets, and cried for a division, for bread, and the decrees. Féraud, who had risen from the ground, again rushed forward to protect the President, dashed away a pike which was directed against Boissy, but was himself shot down by a pistol. He was then dragged out and killed outright, and his bloody head was then brought in upon a spear and held up before Boissy, who greeted it with reverence, but even at this moment remained firm and quiet. The leaders of the insurrection saw that a great part of the Deputies had retreated before the tumult, and they now wished to get their motions passed. But even they could not get a hearing; the multitude incessantly streamed backwards and forwards, drank, shouted, and cried for bread and liberty; it was

many hours before Goujon and his friends could bring about any kind of discussion. Meanwhile the report of these excesses had at last set a number of Sections in motion, and as it began to grow dark several battalions of National Guards were assembled on the Place; but no one of them knew where the Government Committees were to be found, or whether any government at all still existed. When Boissy d'Anglas with his secretaries left his bureau towards nine o'clock, the Montagnards forced the aged Vernier into the President's chair, and caused the Deputies who were still present to be driven by the people into the middle of the Hall; whereupon Goujon, Romme and Soubrany, brought forward their patriotic motions, each of which was proclaimed on the spot as law amidst waving of hats. Secretaries however were wanting to write them down, and it was not till after 11 o'clock that Goujon procured the nomination of an executive committee, which was to take the Government in hand, and arrest the previous committees. But just at this moment the latter had succeeded in communicating with the National Guard and bringing up fresh reinforcements; immediately afterwards Boissy d'Anglas returned to the President's chair, and just as the revolutionary Committee was about to set itself in motion, Legendre, Chénier, and other Thermidorians, appeared at the head of armed men. A hand to hand fight immediately began. The insurgents were driven back, but they also received reinforcements and once more expelled the troops from the Hall amidst loud cries of victory from the Mountain. But the general march was now sounding out of doors; the battalions in close masses forced their way with fixed bayonets through all the passages, and the rebels escaped in disorderly flight to the galleries, through side doors, or even through the windows. Thirteen Montagnards, who had been conspicuous in the *melée* were stopped and immediately arrested. It was past midnight when the Convention at last found itself in full possession of its freedom. The city was quiet,

and it was only from the Section *Cité* that an occasional roll of the drum was heard.

But the danger was by no means at an end. On the following morning, at the very beginning of the sitting, news was brought that a Convention of the sovereign People had been formed at the Hôtel de Ville, but that the battalions of the well disposed Sections were already marching against them. All the speakers denounced the Terrorists with the greatest energy: "The honest citizens whom they abuse as Royalists," said Larivière, "are not dangerous; the Jacobins on the other hand have been liberated from their prisons, and now you see what use they make of their freedom!" At noon it was reported that the rebels had withdrawn from the Hôtel de Ville to the Faubourg St. Antoine; the National Guard pursued them, but suddenly saw themselves threatened by superior numbers and the artillery of the Faubourg, and did not venture on a contest. Towards 5 o'clock their retreating battalions arrived in front of the Tuileries hotly pursued by the men of the Faubourg. The President announced to the Deputies that the cannon of the enemy was directed against the palace, and Legendre cried out: "I hope that the Convention will remain at its post; the worst that can happen to us is death." A painful silence of half an hour followed; the artillerymen of the two parties were holding a conference, and the citizens announced that the men of the Faubourg were inclined to come to terms, if they were met in a conciliatory manner, and hopes were held out to them of food and a speedy proclamation of the Constitution. The Convention immediately issued a decree which was however equivocal: "The Convention," it said, "always occupied with the question of procuring supplies for the people, orders its Committee of Eleven to lay before it the organic laws of the constitution within four days." On receiving further information respecting the wishes of the people, the law respecting the trade in gold and silver was suspended, and the property of parents of

Émigrés was once more put under sequestration. Hereupon a deputation from the Faubourgs, which still assumed a very imperious tone, was received by the Convention, embraced by the President, and dismissed with the most encouraging assurances. A reconciliation of the parties then took place on the Place du Carrousel, and the men of the Faubourgs marched home with a proud consciousness of victory.

They had indeed gained nothing but fair words, and the Convention waited with bitter impatience for the moment when they could make their power felt. In the midst of the tumult of the 20th the Committee of Public Safety had taken the decided step, and had sent orders to the Army of the North to dispatch 3,000 cavalry in forced marches to Paris. They arrived on the evening of the 22nd, and strong columns of infantry were at the same time approaching the capital from various quarters. The Government now felt strong enough to stand on its own feet, and was thoroughly determined to make use of its power. On the 23rd, the Deputies Aubry, Delmas and Gillet, were entrusted with the command of the armed force; the strictest orders were issued against every attempt at mutiny, and a military tribunal was established for the summary punishment of rioters. When the Faubourg St. Antoine refused to deliver up its artillery and the murderers of Féraud, the Convention threatened to bombard the quarter, and forced it on the same evening to complete submission. Arrests were made without interruption in all parts of the city; the Sections received orders to remain *en permanence* until the disarming of the Terrorists had been completed; and at the same time orders were issued that all pikes should be given up—orders which were carried out by the citizens themselves with the greatest zeal. The new organization of the National Guard was rapidly completed; all workmen, servants, homeless and destitute persons, were exempted from service; and companies of grenadiers and cavalry were formed from volunteers of the richer classes. The Convention had completely

returned into the groove of the first weeks of April, and took every opportunity of shewing honour to the *bourgeoisie* who had hitherto been denounced as royalists.

The Jacobins themselves did their part in keeping up this state of feeling. No sooner had they been put down in Paris, than news arrived that, on the 17th, their friends in Toulon had risen and made themselves master of the city. The Conventional Commissioners in Toulon had written for several weeks past in a tone of great anxiety, saying that the malcontents from all the southern Departments were pouring into this important harbour; that the thousands of dock-labourers were in a state of serious ferment, and that the weak garrison, and a portion of the men in the fleet, were affected by Jacobin sentiments. The fleet was on the point of weighing anchor to attack the English in Corsica, which would have deprived the insurgents of perhaps the most important part of their expected booty; at the same time they heard of the massacre of their friends in Aix and Lyons, and as they were probably aware of the Parisian projects they resolved to delay no longer. On the 17th the first riots took place in the city; and on the 19th the dock-labourers broke out into rebellion; the garrison either dared not, or would not, make any resistance; one of the Representatives shot himself through the head in despair, and the other, Niou, had a narrow escape to the fleet which was anchored in the great roads. It was for many days doubtful whether he could maintain discipline among the sailors; fortunately a division of the Brest fleet had arrived a short time before, and the firm and loyal attitude of its crews intimidated the malcontents among the Toulonese sailors. In the city the insurgents, who consisted of about 8,000 armed men, maintained tolerable order, but announced their intention of marching first to Marseilles, carrying this Commune with them, and then going to the aid of their Parisian brethren with their united forces. The most determined resistance was evidently necessary in this case, and the Gov-

ernment did not hesitate to send the most comprehensive powers to the Conventional Commissioners in the South. But there was no need of an impulse from above to rouse every energy on the spot itself to desperate resistance. Wherever the news was brought, that the Jacobins were in possession of Toulon, the population rose with impetuous fury. Chiappe, one of the Conventional Commissioners in Marseilles, hastened alone with undaunted courage to the revolted city, in order, if possible, to reduce it to submission by the sovereign commands of the Convention: but he could not gain a hearing, and after being detained in arrest for several days, thought himself fortunate to escape unhurt. His colleague Isnard meanwhile collected several military leaders, and some well disciplined divisions of the Italian army. The citizens joined them by thousands with the greatest enthusiasm. It is characteristic of the spirit by which they were animated, that Isnard cried out to them, as they began their march: "If you have not sufficient arms, dig up the corpses of your butchered brothers, and slay the murderers with their bones." A few leagues from Toulon they came upon the rebels who were advancing in loose order; the Jacobins numbered about 3,000 men with twelve guns, while the Conventional Commissioners had more than three times that number at their disposal; yet the insurgents made an obstinate resistance for five hours, until the superior tactics of their enemies turned the scale, and the rebels dispersed in wild flight. On the 31st Toulon surrendered at discretion.

In Paris the varying fortunes of this insurrection were watched with the greatest excitement. There was but one unanimous cry that such an incorrigible faction must be thoroughly put down. On the 24th of May, Pache, Bouchotte, and six of their associates in the old War Ministry of the Mountain, were brought before the Criminal Tribunal, and the *Comité de législation* was ordered to report with all speed on all those Representatives, who, in the character of Commissioners to

the Provinces or the Armies, had sullied their reputation by illegal acts of any kind whatever. During the following day eight more Montagnards were impeached for their participation in the 1st of Prairial; on the 28th all the members of the old Government committees, with the exception of Carnot, Prieur of the *Côte d'Or*, and Louis of the Lower Rhine, were arrested; on the 1st of June eight more Deputies of the Mountain were sent to join their colleagues, who had already been brought before the tribunal. At the same time the trial of Lebon, which had been prepared for several months past, was commenced. Fouquier-Tinville, with fifteen associates, had already been sent to the guillotine, on the 7th of May, amid the execrations of a numerous crowd; and on the 17th of June the Military Tribunal condemned Goujon, Romme, Soubrany, Duquesnoy, Bourbotte and Duroy to death, for their part in the rebellion of the 1st of Prairial. The discussion which preceeded this sentence revived the memory of the Reign of Terror in all its blackest colours; the people listened with ever growing indignation to the atrocities of the Parisian Revolutionary tribunal, the insane raging of Lebon in Arras, the horrible and disgusting particulars of the conduct of other Commissioners;—how one, for instance, had invited the executioner to his table, another had plundered both public and private property, a third had appeared completely naked at a patriotic feast in the theatre, and used the most indecent language in presence of the women there; and how all had shed the blood of both innocent and guilty without any distinction. The immediate consequences of these impressions were:—the abolition of the Revolutionary tribunal, which for more than two years had been the terror of all France; the repeal of the February law respecting the churches, so that henceforward public worship was permitted to every priest who made a simple declaration of submission to the laws of the State; and the granting of powers to the *Comité de législation*, to strike persons from

the list of *Émigrés*, even without a decree of the Convention. "It is necessary," said Sévestre somewhat later, "to alter our language as well as our institutions; we must banish the word, "revolutionary," from our legal vocabulary, and consequently give to the Revolutionary committees, which under this designation have brought upon themselves the curses of the nation, their original title of *Comités de Surveillance.*" The change was decreed amid great applause, and immediately motions of a similar kind were brought forward in abundance. It was proposed to forbid the red Jacobin cap, which, it was said, really belonged to the galley slaves; to strike out the two last words from the inscription, "freedom or death," which was painted up in all parts of the city; and to obliterate all remembrance of the blood and filth of mob rule. It was only a year ago since the Convention had greeted with furious applause the speech of Billaud-Varennes, in which he maintained that they ought to introduce the very opposite of all that existed; they now seemed to have no other desire than to overthrow their own creations, and undo their own deeds.

Public opinion went entirely with them in all these efforts. The infinite majority of inhabitants in Paris, as well as in the Departments, no longer made any concealment of their opinion that the continuance of the Republic was impossible, that the restoration of a constitutional Monarchy was the only chance of deliverance for France. Whoever had taken part in republican politics since 1792, whether as Girondist or Hebertist, as follower of Danton or Robespierre, found himself shunned in society, excluded from every office, and on the slightest occasion exposed to criminal prosecution. The Girondist Lehardy was at that time in Rouen: "Of my family," he reported afterwards to the Convention, "thirteen persons were proscribed during the Reign of Terror, yet I was made an object of suspicion to the misguided people as a Terrorist, and everywhere pursued with the most violent abuse; if I brought a Royalist

or an *Émigré* to trial, the people maltreated every patriot who dared to come forward as a witness; and in all public places I heard men declaring that the war with England was a folly, and that France must have a king. Such is the state of affairs," he concluded, "in Rouen and in all the neighbouring districts." "It is the same," cried a number of voices, "in all the other Departments." In Paris, where political feelings were strongest and most clearly expressed, nine tenths of the citizens openly demanded the Constitution of 1791, with such changes as the interest of peace and order might require. With this wish, however, there co-existed in the minds of most a strong dislike to all political action, or even to an armed opposition against the existing Government; they wished for no more revolutions, not even against the revolutionary rulers. No less decided, lastly, was the abhorrence among the mass of the people towards the *ancien régime*, the restoration of the old nobility, the old hierarchy, and the unlimited monarchy "by the grace of God;" and no error could be more perverse than that of the exiled Princes and the armed *Émigrés* who built their hopes of the realisation of their wishes on the conservative tendencies of the citizens. On the contrary, the eyes of all the Parisians who were favourable to monarchy were directed exclusively to the sole scion of the royal house, whom his unhappy fate had separated from the other members of his family—the captive of the Temple, the next heir of the shattered crown, the son of Louis XVI. In the eyes of some he was once for all the lawful king; to others it was a strong recommendation that he was a prisoner of the Revolution, and that they could, therefore, raise him to the throne without any *entourage* of the *ancien régime*, and, in consequence of his youth, without giving him for a considerable time any personal power. They thought that they might thus rescue the great principle of monarchy, without endangering any of the interests which had arisen since 1789. These views were represented

even in the Constitution-commission of the Convention. Lanjuinais, Boissy d'Anglas, Lesage and the old Durand, confessed their monarchical convictions to their colleagues. They saw, indeed, at once, that they could not carry out their views; that both in the Commission, and still more in the great body of the Convention, no scheme of a Constitution had any chance of success which did not bear the title of a Republic. They ventured, however, on a compromise. They desired above all things that the new Constitution should put an end to the evils of the many-headed administration, and place a President at the head of the government according to the American model, to which their colleagues often referred. They thought that in this way all the advantages of Monarchy and Republic might be united; and that the amalgamation of all parties might be looked for, if the young Louis were made President, and the real authority entrusted to a Council of Regency taken from the Convention, instead of a Vice-President. Their republican colleagues had considerable objections even to this plan; but the current of feeling in Paris was so undoubted, that a large number of Moderate Deputies were gained over to the scheme, and the Commission consented to give it a calm and searching consideration. The existence of a poor tortured child, therefore, who was almost forgotten by the world, suddenly appeared to become an object of the highest political importance.

Were these men, who now deliberated on the elevation of the young Prince to the throne of France, aware of the actual condition of this heir of fifty Kings? Was there the slightest suspicion among them, that the boy, whom they destined for a throne, was at that very moment the victim of a long course of torture—of deliberate and systematic murder? Or did they lack courage to take the necessary steps for the rescue of a life, which was to be the key-stone of their new political fabric?

Since the terrible night of the 3rd of July 1793, in which

the son was torn from the arms of his mother, the existence of the young Louis had been one long series of the most revolting sufferings and torments. No one can read the reports of the martyrdom of this unhappy child, which have been collected by a careful hand, without the deepest emotion. Simon the cobbler, a neighbour and admirer of Marat, had been appointed, on his recommendation, by Robespierre, as jailer of the young Capet. He was a vulgar and inhuman fellow, liable to furious outbursts of rage, and entirely brutalised by his revolutionary fanaticism. His only feeling on undertaking this office was one of malicious joy, at the thought of making the young Prince into a filthy *sansculotte*, and at the same time visiting on his head all the sins of royal despotism. "The young wolf," he said to the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, "has been reared in pride, but I shall master him, though I cannot answer for it that he will not burst in the process. But what is it that you wish? To transport him?—No.—Kill him?—No.—Banish him?—No.—Well then, what the devil do you want?"—The answer was: "We want to get rid of him." Simon needed nothing more. The ill-treatment of the feeble child became his daily refreshment from the ennui of the prison, his pastime and his patriotic office. He clothed the Prince in a *sansculotte* dress, compelled him to wear a Jacobin cap, made him drunk with ardent spirits, and forced him to sing indecent songs. This treatment was varied by abuse, blows, and cruelties of every kind, whenever the child made mention of his parents, whenever he shewed the slightest symptom of resistance to the humiliations inflicted upon him, whenever news arrived of a victory of the Vendéans or the Austrians. The particulars reported by Simon's wife, or other witnesses, are heartrending. The brutal monster one day beat and kicked the boy because he would not repeat the words: "My mother is a harlot." Another time Simon was awakened in the night, and heard the child praying as he knelt by his bedside. "I'll teach

you," he cried, "to whine your paternosters," and pouring a pail of cold water over his body and his bed, he compelled him by blows from an iron-heeled shoe to pass the rest of the winter night in the wet cold bed. For a long time this boy of nine years old resisted his tormentor with wonderful endurance, bore all his tortures with silent weeping, and suppressed his groans that his mother might not hear them and be saddened. But at last his physical strength was exhausted; he preserved an obstinate silence, and kept his eyes fixed upon the ground without speech or movement, no matter what brutalities his tormentors might inflict upon him. In January, 1794, Simon left the Temple to take part in revolutionary politics as a member of the Municipality, and ended his life on the 9th of Thermidor on Robespierre's scaffold; but the lot of the imprisoned boy was only rendered worse. Robespierre decreed that there was no need of any special jailer for the young Capet, and the Municipality thereupon caused the Prince to be shut up in a little cell, in which he was compelled to pass full six months in the deepest abyss of misery, without any company whatever. Once a day his food—a small piece of meat, some bread and water—was pushed through the lattice of the door. The Commissioners of the Hôtel de Ville often made their appearance two or three times in the night, to authenticate the presence of their victim, and rousing the child from his sleep by abuse and threats compelled him to shew himself at the lattice. He saw no one else, received no water to wash himself, no change of clothes or bedding; not even the excrements were removed from the ever closed and unaired cell. And this slow methodical murder was inflicted for six months long on an unhappy and amiable child, whose only crime was his royal lineage.

On the 10th of Thermidor Barras appeared with a numerous retinue in the Temple, and announced to a member of the Committee of that Section, named Laurent, a zealous patriot and a goodhumoured honest man, that he

had been appointed jailer of the two royal children. Laurent entered on his post on the night of the 11th. He was astonished when they led him by the dim light of a lantern to the entrance of a pestiferous den, from which a feeble voice answered him after repeated calls: but what was his horror, when, on the following day, he caused the door to be broken open, and penetrated the scene of misery itself! In this poisonous atmosphere a pale and emaciated child, with matted hair, lay upon a filthy lair, clothed with half rotten rags, his head covered with an eruption, his neck with festering sores, and his whole body with swarms of vermin. His eyes were widely opened, but dim and without expression; his back was curved, and all his joints were swelled, or sore and bloody. The food of the last few days stood almost untouched; all intellectual activity was nearly extinguished; to the terrified questions of Laurent the boy returned no answer, and sighed out at last. "I wish to die." Laurent was deeply shocked, and by energetic remonstrances to the Government obtained permission to provide the absolute necessaries, at least, for a humane treatment of the child. He was bathed, put into a clean bed, and provided with fresh clothing; he was then brought into the air, and medical assistance was procured for him. But his poor young life was irrevocably nipped. He remained passive under kindness, as formerly under ill treatment; silent and buried in himself, he mistrusted mankind, who had inflicted upon him during a whole year nothing but torture; only now and then a word of thanks, or a stolen tear, came forth like the glimmering of an expiring flame. In November, an honest Parisian citizen, named Gomin, was appointed as assistant to Laurent, and his mild and affectionate care for the first time revived the affections of the slowly withering boy. On the 1st of April Laurent was succeeded by a Captain of the National Guard named Lasne, a brave soldier of republican sentiments, but honest and humane. Unfortunately these men were only permitted to alleviate

the miserable fate of the Dauphin in a very slight degree. The Government committees no longer, indeed, openly expressed a wish,—as the Hebertists had done—that the prisoner should die; but the more public opinion was directed towards him, the more distrustful and suspicions they became, and the more obstinate their disinclination to permit any essential improvement in his condition. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the two keepers extorted permission sometimes to bring the boy on to the platform of the tower; the request to be allowed to take walks in the garden was obstinately refused; his food remained the scanty prison fare, though the state of his health urgently required milder air, easy exercise, and carefully selected nourishment. Employment and society were measured out to him with the same niggardly hand. Up to December, 1794, Gomin was only allowed to be with the prisoner during meal times, and it required repeated efforts to do away with the regulation that the lamp of the prison was not to be lighted until eight o'clock in the evening. When about this time one of the Parisian newspapers praised the Government for taking care of the education and instruction of the child, the *Comité de Sûreté générale* hastened to declare that this report was a malicious calumny of the royalists, and that "the Convention knew very well how to behead tyrants, but not to educate their children." Under such influences the condition of the sick boy grew worse every week; and at the end of February his keepers expressed such great anxiety, that the *Comité de Sûrête générale* sent three of its members into the Temple to enquire into the facts more closely. They found the Prince sitting at a table in his room, playing at cards, with pale and sunken cheeks, with narrow chest and curved back, silent and inattentive, without a look or an answer for his visitors. They expressed great indignation at the restrictions and privations to which he was subjected, so that the attendants ventured in a slight degree to improve the food of the boy.

From that time several months passed without anything being heard from the Government. We know that at that time—during the violent struggle between the Jacobins and the Moderates—the party of the Independents chiefly occupied the Committees, and these men did not exactly wish to bring on the death of the Prince, but they would do nothing to prevent it: They tacitly allowed him to remain in close and needy imprisonment, and thereby, considering the state of his heath, they virtually sanctioned his sentence of death; and the more lively the hopes which the Royalists built on the miserable captive of the Temple, the more obstinately did the ruling powers persist in this pitiless course of conduct.

On the 3rd of May the jailers reported that the little Capet was ill. They received no answer. They wrote again on the 4th that he was seriously ill. Still no answer. On the 5th they reported that his life was in danger. The Committee probably thought that for form's sake something must now be done, and might be done without injury to the Republic. They therefore sent the famous surgeon Dessault, who had treated the Prince before the Revolution, and who was deeply moved on seeing the poor victim again. He ordered him some medicine, but told the attendants that the case was utterly hopeless: the only thing, he said, which might perhaps benefit him, was a residence in a milder climate. The Committee gave no answer to this suggestion, nor to the pitious entreaties of the sister of the Dauphin—who was confined in another prison of the Temple—to be allowed to see and nurse her dying brother. On the 30th of May Dessault replied to a city Commissioner, who said, "The boy is lost, is he not?"—"I fear so; perhaps there are some people who hope so." On the following day Dessault died after an illness of three hours; so sudden a death, under such circumstances, excited a gloomy suspicion throughout Paris, and contributed no little to the reports which were afterwards spread concerning the end of

Louis XVII. The Committee allowed five days to pass before appointing a successor to Dessault; and the feelings of the rulers might be gathered from the fact, that even now no one was allowed to visit the poor sick child from eight o'clock in the evening till 9 in the morning, and that he was left entirely alone throughout the night in his sufferings and sorrows. The new physician, Dr. Pelletan, insisted, with lively indignation, that his bed should be removed to a room the windows of which were not nailed up with boards, and which allowed ingress to the sun-light. Louis took all this passively like everything else, felt himself a little refreshed, but said, when Gomin nevertheless observed a tear on his cheek: "I am always alone; my mother, you know, remained in the other Tower." He little knew that she had been resting in her grave for nearly two years; love for his mother was the last spark of his fading consciousness. On the 8th of June all the symtoms of approaching dissolution increased. The Prince lay in his bed without moving; when Gomin asked him whether he was in pain he answered, "yes," but said that the music above was so beautiful, and then suddenly cried in a loud voice: "I hear the voice of my mother; I wonder whether my sister heard the music too." Then followed a long silence and then a joyful cry "I will tell you," and he turned to Lasne who was bending over him to listen. But Lasne heard nothing more, the boy had ceased to breathe and the sacrifice was completed.[1]

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[1] Even after the latest discussion of the vexed question concerning the fate of Louis XVII. (in Louis Blanc vol. XII, cap. 2). I see no reason to make any alteration in the above account. We may concede to Louis Blanc, that the descriptions of Lasne and Gomin, 30 years after the occurrences, are not to be relied upon in every particular. But this is all that the materials which he has brought forward can prove. The silence of the Prince, which is (according to the views, not exactly maintained by him, but strongly dwelt upon throughout), a proof of

The *Comité de Sûreté générale* received the news with affected indifference, ordered the fact to be entered in the civil registers, and had the corpse dissected by the physicians who had treated the Prince. The examination proved the same fact which the Princess afterwards recorded in her memoirs: he was not poisoned; the venom with which he was killed was want of cleanliness, ill-treatment, and revolting cruelty. On the 9th, the Committee reported to the Convention on the death of the Dauphin; the Assembly heard it in silence, and immediately passed on to other questions. Yet it made a deep impression on all sides. The Republicans were filled with inward satisfaction, and relieved from pressing anxiety; the Royalists, and with them the great mass of the population, were struck as with a heavy blow. Uncertain and undeveloped as had been the hopes which had attached themselves to the name of the imprisoned child, they had always pointed to the sole way of effecting a compromise between otherwise irreconcileable antagonists. The legitimate King was now Louis XVIII. —the head of the armed emigration; there was now no

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the substitution of a dumb child in the place of the Dauphin, may be naturally explained by the horrible ill-treatment to which he was subjected. The chief difficulty of this hypothesis, Louis Blanc has altogether overlooked. This consists, not in the question, why the Dauphin was kept concealed after his escape; this question might be met by a reference to the troubles of the times, the discord of the royalists and the character of the Count of Provence. But it seems to me absolutely inexplicable why the Committee of Public Safety, which was anxiously desirous of peace, and in great fear of the constitutional agitation, should have hesitated for months—in the face of the Spanish government, which for a long time refused to make peace on account of the imprisonment of the Prince, and in the face of the constitutional party in Paris, which for months endeavoured to restore the monarchy in his favour—to reveal the truth, if they really only kept an unknown and supposititious child in the prison of the Temple,

other choice than between the unconditional restoration of the *ancien régime*, and the continuance of the Republic. Even the most decided among the Moderates and Royalists in Paris no longer hesitated for a moment. In the Commission of Eleven, Lanjuinais and his friends voted at once for the appointment of a Republican Excecutive Council.

CHAPTER II.

FOREIGN POLICY.

The moderate party are for peace, the revolutionists for war.—Enormous quantity and great depreciation of the assignats; want of security.—Terrible consequences of their decreasing value.—Swindling and bankruptcy.—Financial destitution of the state.—Treaty with Holland.—Carletti's report respecting the wishes of Austria.—Plans and wishes of the imperial courts (summer 1795).—Siéyès is favourable to Carletti's proposals.—The moderates inform Hardenberg of them.—Excitement in Germany; Austria denies everything.—Hardenberg sends an agent to Paris.—Cessation of arms on the Rhine.—The French army in Italy needs reinforcement.—The committee of public safety resolve to make peace with Spain.—Corresponding sentiments in Madrid.—Negotiation in Basle.—Influence of General Bonaparte with the committee of public safety.—French victories in the western Pyrenees.—Peace with Spain concluded at Basle.

We observe a great uncertainty in the position of affairs. All the interests and feelings of a large majority of the population were earnestly directed towards peace, quiet, legal order, and the restoration of a strong and lasting polity, which might guarantee to the country harmony with its neighbours, and to the inhabitants security for labour and property. But the tremendous convulsions of the last few years had thrown every thing into confusion, and had attached some through their ambition, and others through the hope of gain, to the continuance of a revolutionary state of things. The task of rearing a sound polity on the ruins of the Reign of Terror was in itself infinitely difficult;

and how small was the number of disinterested men among the rulers, who looked only to the weal of their country, without a thought of personal aggrandizement! And yet nothing was more certain, than that the future welfare, not only of France, but of all Europe, depended on the question whether right or might, whether law or passion, whether constitution or revolution, carried off the palm in Paris. Domestic and foreign policy were as closely united with one another in 1795 as in 1792: the same necessities which created the Moderate party at home, urgently called for peace abroad; and the same passions which despised the rights of fellow-citizens in France, burst furiously and rapaciously over all the neighbouring frontiers. And, as before, we can clearly trace this connexion in the politico-economical and financial circumstances of the times.

The Thermidorians had succeeded no better than Robespierre in re-establishing the finances of the State upon their natural foundations. They could not raise taxes, for the simple reason that there were no organized authorities for collecting them, and that the taxpayers were sunk in poverty. If ever a citizen was found who, from some whim or other, wished to pay his quota, he did so, of course, in *assignats*, and these had now fallen so low, that the State in reality scarcely received a twentieth part of its demand. At the time of the 1st of Prairial (the end of May 1795) the mass of paper money which had been issued had risen to nearly 13,000 millions, of which 10,000 millions were in circulation; and, in correct proportion to this enormous sum, the exchange had fallen to 7 per cent. As the State had no other means of defraying its expenses than this paper—as it reckoned the *assignats* at their nominal worth to the officials and stockholders, but only at the current price to the army, the great contractors and the workmen—it is evident, that it must continually use more and more paper money, that the issue of the latter must increase every month, that, consequently, its value must continually fall, and that

its fall must, in turn, increase the expenditure of the following month. At the end of June, instead of 10,000 millions, more than 11,000 were in circulation; at the end of July 14,000, and at the end of August 16,000 millions, and the market had fallen to 4,3 and 2½ per cent. The Committee of Public Safety found that they were no longer able to print the daily quantity of notes, if they issued any of a smaller value than 10,000 francs. There were days when the treasury owed a *milliard and a half* in *assignats*, because the press was not able to keep up even with the most necessary expenses.

The financiers of the Convention vainly endeavoured to convince the nation of the goodness of their paper money, and thereby to stop the fall of the exchange. At the end of 1794—when, by the way, 7,000 millions of *assignats* were in circulation—Johannot reported that the State possessed a mass of property, as security for their paper money, which yielded more than 300 millions a year; as, therefore, he said, an estate was generally sold at 40 years purchase, there existed 12 milliards of property as security for 7 milliards of paper, and consequently the holders of the latter were perfectly guaranteed against loss. The credibility of this calculation was not exactly confirmed by its being from time to time modified with astonishing elasticity. While national estates were continually being sold, Johannot proved in April, when the *assignats* had risen to 9 milliards in number, that the State still possessed 16 milliards in land. Nor was it difficult to point out the mistakes in this calculation. Before the Revolution, landed property in France was sold on the average at 30 years' purchase; but its value had fallen everywhere—in the case of small estates two-fifths, and in larger ones from three to four-fifths. If a piece of land fetched a higher price at the auction of the national estates, it was entirely owing to some swindling transaction, generally to a design of exhausting the land for a time, and then abandoning it at the approach of the term for

paying the next instalment. Johannot's hope, therefore, of obtaining 40 years' purchase, was a pure illusion; the Government had to be contented if they obtained 20 years' purchase, that is, a capital of 6 milliards. At the end of 1794, consequently, after all the colossal confiscations, the amount of paper money already exceeded the property on which it was secured.

This security was, moreover, entirely destroyed, when the Convention was obliged to close some of the most fearful wounds of the Reign of Terror. By the decree of the 1st of January the State undertook to pay the debts of the *Émigrés* whose lands it had confiscated: the amount of these debts was found to be 1,800 millions, distributed over a million creditors. Still more considerable was the mass of property which had been given up, since May, to the families of the condemned—the confiscations of Robespierre's time—which proved to be somewhat more than half the entire domains of the State. If we take these two items together—1,800 millions for the debts of the *Émigrés*, and 3,200 millions for restored lands—there remain of the above mentioned 6 milliards, about 1,000 millions worth, in round numbers, of landed property, which in the autumn of 1795 were the only security for 16,000 millions of *assignats*. [1]

The State, therefore, was avowedly drifting into a bankruptcy of unexampled extent. It is easy to imagine what a dissolution and confusion of all private affairs must be the necessary consequence of such a state of things. The greatest sufferers were the officials and creditors of the State, who received their salaries and dividends in assignats at their nominal value, and who therefore lost 93 per cent in May, and 97 per cent in July. A decree of the Committee of Public Safety in August shews what they thought of the position of these persons: the State, it said, would distribute to the proletaries,

[1] Lecoulteux "Council of 500," April 14th 1796: the restitution diminished the income of the national estates to 140 millions.

the public officials, and the holders of government securities, tallow candles, oil, and herrings, at a quarter of the market price. But they were not the only persons who felt the pressure of the times. As long as the State recognised the *assignats* as a legal tender, no creditor could force his debtor to any other kind of payment, and the cases were unfortunately not frequent, in which the debtor was honourable enough voluntarily to forego the advantage of the moment. The man who in the year 1790 had received a loan of 10,000 francs, bought a similar amount in paper, in the summer of 1795, for 20 *louisd'or*; and the creditor who received these *assignats* for his demand saw them melt in about four weeks to the value of 12 or 15 louis. In July the Convention made an attempt to put a stop to this abuse, by a law which decreed an addition of 25 per cent on the nominal worth—in the case of a long standing debt—for every 500 million *assignats* which were in circulation above the sum of 2 milliards. As then 12 milliards were in circulation at this time, 9,000 francs in *assignats* would have to be paid for a debt of 1,000 francs in silver, while the real value of the latter sum would have been 33,000 francs in *assignats*, according to the current exchange. So futile a law could have no other fate than to fall, after four weeks, into utter oblivion. The evils which it was intended to remedy increased with terrible rapidity. The temptations to which they gave birth poisoned all the relations of traffic, friendship, and family. A younger brother complained to the Convention, on the 18th of May, that his father having left him a twelfth of his property, his brother, who had hitherto been in possession, had now paid him his portion in *assignats*, and that he had consequently received scarcely a two hundredth part of his inheritance. On the 13th of July the Legislation-committee reported on a frequent and crying abuse. Many husbands took advantage of the easy laws of divorce to plunder their wives, by dissolving the marriage, and then paying back the marriage portion in

worthless *assignats*. But the greatest advantage of this state of things accrued to the tenant farmers, who paid their rents to the landlords in *assignats*, and were enabled, by the high prices of corn, to pay the rent of a whole farm with a single sack of corn; thus, while the owners were perishing in want and misery, the tenants saw their own wealth increasing from day to day. In the smallest peasants' cottages, furniture of mahogany and rosewood was to be seen, together with plate and silk, ostentatious banquets, and well filled cellars. The rural districts now presented a most striking contrast to the distress which prevailed during the Reign of Terror, when, as we have seen, they were plundered and ill-treated to feed the city proletaries. The balance of power was now completely changed, and the feelings of the present gainers had unfortunately not been purified, but poisoned, by the unjustice they had formerly experienced. These melancholy phenomena were repeated in every province and in every class. Money, which was formerly sought by every one, was now passed from hand to hand like a piece of hot iron: every man endeavoured to yet rid of it, in any legal way, for a tolerably secure possession. Commerce had sunk to a mere usurious gambling, since every one had before his eyes the daily fall in the value of *assignats*, and the consequent rise in the price of wares; even those, therefore, who had no thought of gain, but only wished to avoid loss, bought up as large stores of every kind of goods as they could in any way obtain. As ready money had been rendered very rare by the Emigration, the requisitions, and the unfavourable balance of trade ever since 1789; and as the rate of interest had risen in the wealthiest Departments to 12 per cent and in Paris to 30 per cent—there was virtually no banking business at all. The dealers in old stores had taken the place of money dealers, and advanced, not ready money, as formerly, upon pledges, but *vice versa*, exchanged the falling *assignats* for furniture, clothes, watches, rings, books, and provisions, at, of course, their own usurious prices. It is easy to under-

stand the difficulty under such circumstances of providing for the people, in the midst of a scarcity, when every possessor of property was endeavouring to invest his capital in stores of goods, and thereby withdrawing the latter for a long time from circulation. Before the end of the year the paper money was almost exclusively in the hands of the proletaries, the officials, and the small *rentiers*, whose property was not large enough to invest in stores of goods, or national lands.

The traffic in national estates presented the same scandalous phenomena. That no one even now, in spite of the foreign victories, had any full confidence in the possession of a confiscated property, betrayed itself on every occasion. The lands which had once belonged to the church fetched a higher price than those of the *Émigrés;* and of the latter no estate could find a purchaser, even at the lowest price, if it was burdened with any kind of mortgage from former times. But the more the solvent purchaser withdrew, the more eagerly did the unconscientious speculator press forward at such sales. At the end of May, when the Convention, naturally wishing to accelerate the sale, and to withdraw a large quantity of paper money from circulation, passed a resolution that every national estate might be acquired, without auction, if the purchaser paid, within three months, seventy-five times the rent of the property as it was in 1790—a kind of bacchanalia of avarice ensued. The *assignats*, as we have said, stood at this time at seven per cent; whoever, therefore, possessed ready money in silver could obtain seventy-five francs in paper for five francs, and consequently buy any national property for five times its rent in 1790. In addition to this, it had frequently been a custom in old times only to enter one half of the real rent in the contract, and to pay the other half with the rent, in the form of the so-called *pot-de-vin;* consequently a property was obtained according to the new law for a little more than double the rent. Such a prospect enticed buyers enough. It was ordained that the first who appeared at the time appointed for the sale should

receive the property; and the officials reported, that as soon as the clock had struck a rush was made at their doors by perhaps thirty bidders, one of whom had been first on the threshold, but had been run over by a second on the staircase, while the third rushed past both into the bureau. As the claims of simultaneous bidders were decided by lot, rich people sent ten or twenty servants or artisans to secure themselves a large number of lots; others sent in written offers for all the national estates, situated in their district, at once. In spite of all this, the Convention would have shut their eyes, if they could have swept some milliards of *assignats* from circulation by this manœuvre, so overpowering was the necessity of lessening the mass of paper, and raising its value. But not even this object was gained by this reckless extravagance: on the contrary, it drove all the purchasers to take common measures to depress the exchange, in order to procure their purchase money at the lowest possible price. As soon as this became evident the Convention no longer hesitated. The law was suspended, and not only that, but with all the frivolity of revolutionary policy, the sales already completed were cancelled, and thereby a fresh and heavy blow dealt to the credit of the State. Notwithstanding this, a similar project was concocted in the very same weeks for selling the houses which belonged to the State—and which, partly from bad management, and partly from the cost of repairs, yielded no return—for a hundred and fifty times their rent in 1792. The result may be easily calculated. Since 1788, rents in Paris had fallen to a tenth of their former amount, while *assignats* at the present moment (July 1795) stood at three per cent of their nominal worth: according to this decree, therefore, a house might be bought for the half, in silver, of its former rent. There was, of course, no question of the execution of this law.

What means were not tried during those summer months to close the source of all this misery, and to maintain the value of the *assignats!* One plan was to make a large lottery

loan of a *milliard* at three per cent interest: but unfortunately, in spite of interest and prizes, no one had any inclination to trust his *assignats* to this government, however low their value. They then hit upon the idea, that though the peasants and merchants might have no silver, they possessed corn and goods, and that nothing would be easier than to restore the finances, if they obliged the taxpayers to pay in kind, according to the prices of 1790. This subject was debated for weeks, and the patent evils of such a system were pointed out, but at last half the land-tax was demanded in corn. The country once more resounded with loud and overwhelming protestations that it would not suffer a new *maximum* to be laid upon it under any form whatever, and the execution of the law remained very incomplete. In a word, every new attempt proved only too plainly that no power on earth could wipe out the consequences of former violence. The cup which Robespierre had filled to overflowing with violations of law and right, must be drained to the very dregs. After the horrible *yesterday* there was no balm for the sufferings of *to-day:* the only problem capable of solution was, how to reach firm ground again for *to-morrow* in the shortest possible time. The nation had fallen into an abyss of suffering, by wishing to conquer the world; and to obtain freedom, by precipitation and breaches of the law: to return to prosperity and wealth again there was but one single path—the path of economy, order and justice.

To examine the budgets of the Government at this time would not repay us for our trouble, since the items are nothing more than arbitrary references to an indefinite mass of *assignats*, which were continually increasing in number and falling in value. It lies in the very nature of things that disorder, confusion, and want, must produce the same results in the finances of the State, as in those of a private household. The Government, as we know, was divided against itself, wavering and ill-administered; and we may easily conjecture that in the condition of the land as above

described, its agents found a thousand opportunities for fraud, extortion and embezzlement. All kinds of complaints, therefore, continued to be made, as in Robespierre's time, against the administration—complaints of the starving of all the Departments, the neglect of the roads, canals, and bridges—the decline of the schools and hospitals—the ruin of the forests and harbours. The troops received their pay very irregularly; the manufacture of arms was at a standstill; and the fortresses were badly kept up. The former campaign had cost an immense number of men, so that the armies on the frontiers had lost three-eighths of their strength in a single year; but no one dared to speak of a new levy, although all the generals were loudly calling for reinforcements. For even with the present number of troops, the administration of the army devoured more than two-thirds of the entire revenue of the State, though the troops were living at the expense of the enemy, or perishing of hunger. If the country wished to save money and to prosper at home, if it wished to return to law and order, there was but one effectual and indispensable way of doing so—and here, again, we may observe the close connexion between home and foreign policy—and that was peace.

It will become evident after these considerations, why the great mass of the people, and the Moderate party in the Convention who represented them, rejected the policy of conquest which such violent energy; and why Hardenberg, a few weeks after he had virtually given up the left bank of the Rhine to the Committee of Public Safety, could hope for a peace between France and the Empire without any sacrifice of German territory.

But we know that these leanings, although greatly predominating among the people, had but a limited and uncertain influence in the governing circles. It was not only the Jacobins who were hostile to peace. The faction of Independents, a portion of the Thermidorians, nay, among the Moderates several of the old Girondists, zealously adhered to

the previous warlike policy. They thought that the national honour would allow of no peace without ample territorial gains. They would have seen in it a repudiation of their favourite principles of universal freedom, and the overthrow of thrones. The financial distresses only favoured the conclusion in their minds, that the booty obtained in war was the most convenient compensation for deficits at home. Siéyès and Rewbell, who daily acquired a more commanding position among men of these sentiments, had just concluded a treaty of alliance with the Netherlands, which gave the Republic, in addition to the support of the Dutch fleet, supplies for the maintenance of 25,000 men (who were allowed, for the present, to remain as garrisons in the Dutch fortresses), and which, moreover, brought a war contribution of 100 million florins to the Treasury; which was equivalent, at the existing exchange, to an amount of nearly three milliard francs in *assignats*. Siéyès contemptuously shrugged his shoulders when his peaceful colleagues talked of restoring Holland to her independence as speedily as possible, and perhaps enlarging her borders by the addition of Cleves and Prussian Gelderland. Tallien, although usually opposed on all points to Siéyès, zealously supported him in this matter, and took every opportunity of declaring that France must surround herself on all sides by dependent and affiliated republics, and thereby make herself the leading power of Europe. Just at the time of the peace of Basle they received fresh and powerful nourishment for these tendencies from an unexpected quarter.

I have already mentioned that the Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany, brother of the Emperor Francis, had sent the Chevalier Carletti to Paris to negociate a peace. As Tuscany had never taken an active part in the contest against France, and as neither party had violated the frontiers of the other, the peace had been concluded in February without any difficulty. Carletti had then remained in Paris as minister for Tuscany, and was in great favour with the rulers,

since he had always displayed a lively enthusiasm for the French revolution. He moved with great splendour in the social circles which had been once more formed since the events of Thermidor, gave splendid banquets to the most influential members of the Committees, and formed intimate relations with the chiefs of all parties. When the Prussian negotiation was in full train, he began to turn these connexions to account by warning his French friends against the untrustworthiness and unsteadiness of Prussia, so that two or three hostile speeches in the Convention were represented to the court of Berlin as being inspired by Carletti. Meanwhile the Peace of Basle was concluded, and it was often said in Paris how advantageous it would be if a Prusso-Scandinavian alliance could be developed from it. Carletti then hinted that France had much better chances than that, and at last uttered the important words, that Austria was ready to make an immediate peace with the Republic, on the condition of definitively ceding Belgium and the Left bank of the Rhine to France, if the French in return would help her to get possession of Bavaria. He did not say that he had a regular commission to make this offer on the part of the Austrian government, but he hinted that he was most intimately acquainted with its resolutions [1] on that point. Considering the near family connexion of his Prince with the Emperor, and the close relations between Thugut and Manfredini, there was nothing improbable in this. The Bavarian *Chargé d'affaires* at Vienna also reported to his Government, that there was no longer any doubt that Tuscany had made peace with the consent of Austria, who gained thereby a *point d'appui* for herself in Paris. [2] Prussia likewise received positive intelligence from Florence, that Carletti's mission was the work of Thugut, who was thereby

[1] From the papers of the Hardenberg mission in Basle, which will be quoted more particularly below.

[2] Reichlin to Vieregg, March 3rd.

opening a channel for a negotiation of his own.[1] At any rate Carletti was able to prove the authenticity of his overtures to the French statesmen: there were several among them who declared his propositions to be pernicious, but there was not one who did not feel well assured that they expressed the wishes of the Austrian government, and who did not, consequently, look for the speedy opening of an official negotiation. All, without exception, were convinced that peace, and the Left bank of the Rhine, might at any moment be obtained from the Emperor, in return for the abandonment of Bavaria to Austria. All, without exception, shaped their deliberations and actions in accordance with this supposition.

What were the actual sentiments of Austria at this time?[2]

On the 4th of Februray 1795, Thugut had sent off the Imperial ratification of the secret compact of St. Petersburg, together with a whole series of accompanying despatches, to Cobenzl. The question was, what was to be done, if Prussia, when called upon to acknowledge the treaty of Partition, should prove hostile, and obstinately refuse? Thugut continually repeated that Russia must lend her assistance, intimidate the King of Prussia, and procure English subsidies for the Emperor. Austria, he said, had the most perfect confidence in the wisdom and fidelity of the Empress; should this confidence, however, be unexpectedly deceived, the Emperor, since he could not possibly give up Cracow and Sendomir, would be forced by the perverseness of Prussia, to make a speedy peace with France. On every account,

[1] The ministry to Tauenzien April 12th. As early as November and December Lucchesini had sent word from Vienna that Thugut was in correcpondence with the Tuscan minister Manfredini, in order to keep open a channel of communication with Paris. Further details respecting the secret relations between Austria and France are given by the Prussian ministry on the 8th of June. — [2] On this subject conf. "*Polens Untergang und der Revolutionskrieg*", Sec. 4 in the "*Historische Zeitschrift*" 1870 No. 1.

added Thugut, the Emperor must desire to see the end of this miserable war. In the face of the shameless cupidity of Prussia, the possibility of a Turkish war, and many other alarming circumstances, the Emperor must spare his forces, and withdraw them into the heart of his Hereditary lands, in order to hold them in readiness against every danger that might arise.

In the clearest language, therefore, the head of the Holy Roman Empire made the defence of the Rhine, and the war with France, depend on the question, whether Russia would do every thing in her power to procure him possession of Cracow, in spite of Prussia's resistance. In St. Petersburg, where they still desired the continuance of the French war, this language made a very bad impression. "You threaten us with a French peace," said Ostermann, "it would be more injurious to you than to any one." Markoff at once drew from the despatch the worst conclusions. "You are already negotiating with France," he said. While Thugut, in his inmost heart, desired the hostility of Prussia, that he might then at once make terms with France, and, in alliance with Russia, fall upon his detested rival, the Russians, on the contrary, preferred not to drive Prussia to extremities, that they might have their hands free to act against the Turks. And thus Besborodko carried his point, that the formal presentation of the treaty of Partition should be deferred, and another attempt made in Berlin to come to a friendly understanding. Cobenzl complained that at a conference with Tauenzien, the Russians had, indeed, defended the claims of Austria, but had not only exhorted Prussia to submission, but both parties to reconciliation; nay, that Ostermann himself, in the beginning of April, had brought forward the question, whether Austria, in consideration of some equivalent, would give up the disputed Cracow!

On the Rhine, meanwhile, Clerfait, after the loss of Holland, led his army up the stream to the country between the Lahn and the Main; while the Prussian troops marched in a contrary

direction, between Clerfait's columns, away from the Lahn to Westphalia. As the crisis of Polish affairs was postponed during the conferences at Berlin, the government at Vienna determined to make use of this respite to appease England's and Russia's vexation at the cessation of arms, by some warlike feat against the French. Clerfait received orders to cross the Rhine, to reoccupy Coblentz, raise the blockade of Mayence, and then, if circumstances permitted, to make an effort to relieve the closely-invested Luxemburg. But just as Clerfait was about to commence operations, he received intelligence of the Prussian peace in Basle; and fearing the worst consequences in every quarter from this event, he paused and asked for fresh instructions from Vienna, giving it as his own opinion that, under present circumstances, it would be better to act entirely on the defensive. It is true that he repeatedly received instructions to venture an attack on Coblentz, or against the French corps before Mayence, but at last he sent in a declaration, that in the opinion of a council of war, comprising all his generals, the danger of such an undertaking would, under present circumstances, be out of all proportion to the possible gains.

Vexed as the Emperor and Thugut were, at the time, by the disappointment of their hopes of warlike triumphs, they fully shared in Clerfait's sentiments respecting the peace of Basle. "Prussia's treachery," wrote Thugut on the 20th of April to Cobenzl, "is now clearly brought to light, and the darkest and most comprehensive schemes may be expected of her." He thought of nothing but how he might frustrate these designs by energetic action. As he believed that Prussia, in concert with France, had probably resolved on restoring Poland, he proposed that the Imperial Courts should themselves adopt this measure, retaining as many Polish provinces as their interests required, and creating out of the Prussian acquisitions of 1772, 1793 and 1795, a new kingdom for some prince of Catharine's own choosing. "The crisis," he said, "is a terrible one; our measures must correspond with it."

Thugut, therefore, would no longer be contented with gaining possession of Cracow for Austria; he now proposed measures against Prussia similar to those which Napoleon took at Tilsit, twelve years later, and thereby called for war to the knife, war with all the resources of the Empire. He advocated measures which must necessarily drive the King into the deeply abhorred alliance with France—if Prussia could still obtain it. With such projects in his mind, will it be considered improbable that Thugut did his best to cut Prussia off from this last resource? that Carletti negotiated at his instigation? and that the envoy was at least justified in saying that Thugut was ready in case of need to sacrifice the left bank of the Rhine? Nor was the latter's proposal respecting Poland the mere ebullition of momentary excitement; he repeated it, still more urgently, on the 7th of May; and on the 16th he declared in the most decided manner that, after the recent political knaveries of Prussia, nothing remained to the Emperor but to take active measures against her, and to withdraw his own troops into the Hereditary lands.

Thugut's plans seemed for a moment to obtain a favourable hearing even in St. Petersburg. If we remember the declarations of the 3d of January, we shall easily understand that the Peace of Basle was a heavy blow to Catharine. It was indeed the most inconvenient check to her system of general offensive operations against Bavaria, Italy, and the East. The first outbreak of wrath against Prussia, was, therefore, no less violent in St. Petersburg than in Vienna. The English and Prussian ambassadors reported to their governments, that those about the person of Catharine began to take up again the formerly rejected plan of making the grand Duke Constantine king of Poland. Nay, the contents of the secret declaration of January the 3d were communicated to the American statesman, Governor Morris, whom we have already become acquainted with in Paris; and the idea broached of making Prussia harmless, by uniting Poland, East and West Prussia, with Silesia and Neumark, into an hereditary con-

stitutional monarchy, and at the same time bestowing Bavaria on Austria. Yet however well such plans might suit the transient mood of the Empress, the Russian government was kept firmly in its former groove by the force of its permanent interests. Catharine desired the subjection, but not the destruction, of Prussia; her Turkish schemes were furthered by the continuance of the French war, but destroyed by the outbreak of a conflict with Prussia. The Russian Ministers, therefore, promised Count Cobenzl the most powerful support in respect to Cracow and Sendomir, without engaging themselves to anything beyond the contents of the January treaties. When, then, the news came from Berlin that the last discussion had been fruitless, they proposed to proceed at once to the communication of the treaty of partition, and peremptorily to demand the accession of Prussia. This was what Thugut himself had once wished, but now, after the conclusion of the peace of Basle, it caused him the most serious consideration. He represented to Count Cobenzl, on the 27th of May, the growing confusion in the German Empire, in which the Emperor was not safe for a single day from an open breach with Prussia. The latter Power, he said, was already drawing a portion of its forces towards the East. Austria, on the other hand, had only an insignificant force in Bohemia; and the fortresses in that country were not armed. If, in this position of affairs, the announcement of the partition treaty was made in Berlin, who could foresee the consequences? If the King possessed any energy, his army might soon be at Vienna. Thugut, therefore, demanded that the announcement should be deferred, until Austria had placed an army in Bohemia, and the fortresses in that country had been put in a state of defence.

To such an act of caution, the Russians could not well make any objection, and Austria employed all her military resources for the protection of Bohemia and Moravia. Hence resulted a necessary diminution of interest in the operations on the Rhine. It is true that a very ungracious letter was

despatched on the 10th of June, to Clerfait, scolding him for his inactivity; but the despatch did not end with an order to advance without delay, but with a promise shortly to send him a plan of operations, which he would have to carry out with all speed. For the present, however, as long as the Polish question remained unsettled, the promise was all that he received, the plan of a campaign never appeared, and Clerfait could not stir.

It was a terrible calamity to the German Empire but Thugut had long ago lost all interest in it. His opinion respecting these affairs, had been expressed with the most perfect openness during the last few months, to the Emperor and the Vice-Chancellor, Prince Colloredo. When the Diet of the Empire, in December 1794, called on the Emperor and the King of Prussia to a joint effort in favour of peace, Colloredo declared that, under the circumstances, the Emperor felt himself obliged to reject the disgraceful proposals, to exhort the Estates to energetic preparations for war, and was resolved as the supreme champion of the integrity of Germany, if he must fall, at any rate to fall with honour. Thugut was of a very different opinion; he recommended the simple ratification of the decree of the Diet, and that the negotiation of a peace should be left to Prussia and the pusillanimous Estates of the Empire. The Imperial constitution, he said, as such, had long become impotent; neither the wish nor the intention existed in the Empire to do anything either for the Emperor or for Austria. It was absolutely necessary that the Government at Vienna should at last see matters in their true light, pursue an Austrian policy, and reassume its position as one of the independent great Powers of Europe. By such a course, he said, they would lose nothing but the burden of defending the useless and ungrateful Estates of the Empire.

This view of the case was certainly calculated to lead to an understanding with France, and the mission of Carletti might offer a convenient and desirable starting point; and if

nothing came of it, at any rate no binding obligations would have been incurred.

Carletti's communications, as we may easily suppose, made no slight impression in Paris. The revolutionary factions, Siéyès and his partisans, received them with lively satisfaction. They saw in them the assurance of a splendid and long coveted booty; they saw too, that after the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the constitution of the German Empire must inevitably collapse, since the three chief Electorates would disappear, and the compensation of the other sovereigns on the Rhine would necessitate a complete transformation of the German territory. What splendid opportunities would such a convulsion give for extending French influence, and propagating revolutionary principles? Siéyès, indeed, did not think it right to seize upon the prey with inconsiderate haste, and thereby perhaps render the power of Austria absolute in the remnant of the mutilated body of the Empire. "The Austrian frontier," said he, "must on no account be brought nearer to our own; if Austria wishes to get Bavaria, she must give up the Breisgau and Milan, and seek a compensation for them in the interior of Germany." But that which made him waver still more, was the consideration that France could make use of no State, as predominating power in Germany, which was closely allied with Russia. Just at this time, Monsieur de Staël appeared for the second time as Swedish ambassador, begging and praying for French subsidies and a French alliance; at the same time favourable intelligence was received of the sentiments of the Sublime Porte, which was ready, under favourable circumstances, to renew the war against the Imperial courts. If Prussia would but make up her mind to range herself openly and energetically on the same side, the ambitious Abbé would have considered such a combination more desirable and fruitful than any negotiation with Austria. But in that case Prussia, of course, must begin by a definitive resignation of the left bank of the Rhine;

the disinterested ideas of the Moderates now appeared to the Independents altogether ridiculous and criminal. They would not yet come to any final determination, but under any circumstances they looked forward with ill-concealed joy to a future full of movement, change, and profit.

The Moderate party, on the other hand, were in the highest degree perplexed. They had not yet fixed the particulars of their peace programme, but thus much was clear to them, that a complete abandonment of the policy of conquest was no longer possible. They wavered in their views; they thought of acquiring the Belgian country as far as the Meuse—of rectifying the French frontier by the addition of the Basle territory on the left bank, and of Montbeliard, Saarbrücken, and Liège. Their object was to prevent what the Independents most wished for—*viz.* the overthrow of the Empire, the perpetuation of an unlimited revolutionary policy, and the continuation and extension of a war, which, in their opinion, the material and moral resources of the Republic could not bear. Among those who held these views at that time, was Merlin of Thionville, who since the defence of Mayence had enjoyed a not always well deserved, but undisputed, influence in all affairs which had reference to the Rhine country. He was a zealous Thermidorian, on the worst terms with Siéyès, very excitable, and subject to various influences. In the middle of May he was in Pichegru's head quarters, when Merlin of Douai, at that time member of the Committee, called upon him to give his opinion as to whether the occupation of the Rhine-boundary was conducive to the weal of France or not. Merlin of Thionville replied, that the decision depended on the point of view from which the question was considered. If the French government looked only at its late victories, the best way, no doubt, of deriving advantage from them would be to open a negotiation with the Emperor, and to gain his assent to the incorporation of Belgium and the Rhenish lands by the abandonment of Bavaria to Austria.

But if they called to mind the financial distress of France, the destitution of her armies, and the dangers of internal party-feuds, a speedy conclusion of peace would seem urgently called for, whether they gained from the German Empire, in return, the line of the Meuse, or remained contented with the well founded grandeur of France within her old borders. "As for me," he concluded, "I give my voice for the latter course. I consider it as the only wholesome one: I trust that I shall prevail over the gigantic projects of those who have forgotten the conditions to which the fate of Empires is bound." [1]

In this state of feeling the restless Deputy determined to take an arbitrary step, from which he promised himself a decided success.

Hardenberg was still in Basle, and on the 17th he and Barthélemy fixed the North German line of demarcation. This line, according to their treaty, ran from East Friesland through Münster to Clèves, then along the Rhine to Duisburg, and along the frontier of the county of Mark as far as the Lahn, thence to the Main and along the borders of Darmstadt, then by the Neckar from Eberbach to Wimpfen, thence South East to Nördlingen, finally embracing the territories of the Circles of Franconia and Upper-Saxony. France promised not to commit any hostile act against the territories beyond this line, and Prussia in return guaranteed their strict neutrality. On the day after the signing of this treaty, the Prussian minister, Barthélemy and Bacher, dined at Hüningen with Merlin and Pichegru. After dinner Merlin

[1] J. Reynaud, *Vie et correspondance de Merlin de Thionville*, p. 184. Merlin was not always of that opinion. In November (ibid. p. 119) he wished for the line of the Rhine. And at a later period, when Prussia did not act according to his wishes, he was once more doubtful whether France ought not after all, to treat with Austria; but he soon afterwards changed his mind again, and thought that the safest course would be to negotiate with Prussia and the Empire, without Austria.

told the Minister that Hardenberg must go to Paris for a fortnight; for that Carletti was moving heaven and earth to bring about a peace between Austria and France on the basis described above; that in spite of the protest of Merlin of Douai, who usually took the lead in diplomatic affairs at this moment, Carletti had succeeded so far, that Pichegru had received orders to postpone all hostilities against Austria, although he was ready on his part to cross the Rhine at any moment. Barthélemy avoided making any distinct declaration, but Pichegru confirmed the communication of the Representative to its full extent, and the latter concluded by calling upon Hardenberg to warn the German Estates against the ambition of Austria. Merlin protested that his sole wish was that a Prusso-French alliance should dictate a general peace, and that France should claim the country, not as far as the Rhine, but only as far as the Meuse.

Hardenberg, of course, was very much struck by such a definite disclosure. It was impossible for him to go in person to Paris; he therefore resolved with Barthélemy's assent to send thither one of his officials, the Councillor of Legation, Gervinus, while he himself set off without delay to Berlin to make his report in person to the King. In Mannheim, he spoke with the Duke Max Joseph of Deux-Ponts, communicated to him in desperate haste the important news, and begged him privately to inform his cousin, the Elector Charles Theodore, of what was going on. The Duke's *Chargé d'affaires*, the Abbé Salabert, did this in an official ministerial note, which was immediately sent on by the Bavarian government to their Federal ambassador at the Diet of Ratisbon. The note thus fell under the eyes of the Imperial ambassador at that place, and Hardenberg had scarcely communicated his intelligence to the King, when an Austrian circular was sent round to all the German courts, declaring the whole story to be an insane and childish fable, the further propagation of which would be an insulting calumny against the Emperor; Austria, it said, had

never thought of negotiating with France, and least of all through the channel of the so-called Count Carletti.

In the face of these contending communications, the Prussian government had first to consider the difficult question, whether Thugut or Merlin were the more worthy of belief. Haugwitz was of opinion for the moment that Merlin's story was only designed to cheat Prussia by a bold falsehood into a hostile and offensive attitude towards Austria. His official answer to the Austrian circular, therefore, expressed the conviction that Hardenberg had heard vague reports of this kind, and had repeated them as such to a very few persons. But the despatches which Harnier soon afterwards sent from Basle, and Gervinus from Paris, only proved too clearly that there was something more in the matter. In the first days of June, and, therefore, while the impressions of the 1st of Prairial were fresh, and the Moderate party full of vigour, Barthélemy communicated to the Prussian official that the leaning of his Government was not to insist upon the Rhine boundary, but to rest satisfied with the rectification of frontiers. He therefore urgently begged that Prussia would induce the German Empire speedily to come to terms on this condition. He warmly protested that he made this communication only from fear that Austria—which had already assented to the line of the Rhine in return for the acquisition of Bavaria—should take the whole peace negotiations into her own hands, and turn them to her own special advantage amidst ever growing complications. On the 29th of May, Gervinus had a conference with a Commission of the Committee of Public Safety, in which, as Siéyès was the chief speaker, he became acquainted with the views of the revolutionary parties. The tone assumed by the Abbé was extremely harsh and cutting. "Whence," he asked first of all, "have you got your ideas respecting our Austro-Bavarian negotiation?" When Gervinus merely replied that all Germany was full of this report, he said with angry vexation, that those who

shewed no confidence must look for none. "However," he continued, "you tell us that we may speak to you with confidence; well then, I will disclose to you our inmost thoughts; we need a peace to restore and strengthen ourselves at home; but we must have a glorious peace, a new and lasting system for Germany, where a few States more, and a few States less, ought to exist. "Have you", he suddenly asked, "a fixed plan for a general peace, with the map in your hand?" When Gervinus answered in the negative, he rejoined: "Prussia must lay such a plan before us; we cannot negotiate till she has done so; we do not understand this chaos of the German Empire; it has never acknowledged us, and has no existence for us; we can only carry on separate negotiations with individual Princes." Gervinus begged him to fix a more definite basis to treat upon. "The National convention," cried Siéyès, "has already settled our boundary by a vote; the Rhine will be one of these, this is unalterably fixed." "Then that," asked Gervinus, "is the will of the French government, and not merely the opinion of a few Deputies?" Siéyès answered: "I did not say that, I did not mean that." At the close of the conference he became a little more friendly, and said that the bonds which united Prussia and France must be drawn closer, that the Republic would gladly increase the strength of Prussia, if the latter would only meet the former in the right spirit. Some days afterwards, Gervinus spoke with Boissy d'Anglas, whom he also knew as an able and trustworthy man. Boissy no more denied the existence of a negotiation with Austria than Siéyès had done. On the contrary, while he tried to calm the apprehensions of Gervinus with respect to the extent of the danger, he said, "our negotiation with Austria has, as yet, made very little progress." To prove this he represented that he himself, and the majority of the Convention, were extremely desirous of peace, but that they would not conclude it at such a price. They were, he said, decidedly averse to giving up

the Magyars, and that the latter would rather fight the Prussians than the French; and lastly, that there was only one war in which Hungary would joyfully engage—a war against the Turks.

Considering all things, therefore, the Austrian Government could not think of rivalling the French Republic in the display of its resources. When they surveyed the more distant horizon, they saw that in Italy they were on the worst footing with Piedmont; the two States mutually upbraided each other for neglecting the duties of allies, and Thugut was just sending an almost threatening *ultimatum* to Turin, in which he demanded, as the price of further military aid, the restoration of territory which had been ceded to Savoy in the Austrian War of Succession. In the German Empire, as usual, there was nothing but rivalry and jealousy among the Estates, as to who should most successfully escape the burdens of war. Holland was full of ill-feeling towards Austria, and now openly demanded, as the price of continuing to join in the war, that the Emperor should cede to the Dutch the forts Lillo and Liefkenshoek near Antwerp, and a district between Roermond and Maestricht. The Government at Vienna would listen to nothing of the kind; and in this quarter too, as everywhere else, arrived at purely negative results.

If we survey this long series of impossibilities—impossibility that the French, who could not be overwhelmed in the autumn of 1793, *before* the beginning of their great armament, should be conquered now *after* its completion—impossibility of gaining any effectual aid from the German Empire, Italy, or Holland—impossibility of Austria's increasing her own military forces in any considerable degree—there can remain no doubt, that a far-seeing and calculating mind could only refuse the subsidy to Prussia, and thereby reject all Prussian aid, with a decided indifference to the French war, and with feelings which made it regard many other

interests as infinitely more important than a victory over the Jacobins. And we cannot doubt that such feelings existed in full force in the mind of Thugut. To please the Empress Catharine he was prepared to take part in the approaching campaign, and had, for the present, no objection to make, if unexpected successes could be obtained with the existing means. But he had no intention of making new exertions for the attainment of this object; for if it should prove impossible to conquer Alsace, he now hoped to annex the Venetian States instead. If he were compelled to conclude a disadvantageons peace with France, and perhaps to give up Belgium, he hoped to console himself with the spoils of Turkey. He could soon reconcile himself to a moderate increase of the power of France, if only the main object, the humiliation of his Prussian rival, could be effected. The intensity of Thugut's dislike towards the latter country increased with every hour. In the beginnig of the year 1794, the evil tidings of Wurmser's defeat on the Rhine arrived in Vienna. The effect produced was immense. For the moment ever the star of Rollin was obscured by the disaster of his friend; and he was not able, in opposition to Lascy and Prince Colloredo, to prevent the dismissal of the old general. But Thugut was fully persuaded that the only cause of the heavy calamity was the treachery—the open systematic treachery—of the Prussian generals; and that the Duke of Brunswick had a criminal understanding with the French. He was confirmed in this, as we know, groundless suspicion, by Lehrbach's despatches from Berlin, which repeatedly affirmed that Prussia had secretly come to a friendly unterstanding with France. The Emperor was no less deeply affected by the blow. News had just arrived of the fall of Toulon. Francis received the Prussian ambassador Lucchesini with sorrowful aspect. "I cannot", said he, "complain of others, for I have myself committed great blunders and am ashamed of myself." He then spoke of the duty of all sovereigns to stand by one another in this great

while Luxemburg capitulated, and the prospect of a royalist rising in Franche Comté was entirely destroyed. English commissioners who arrived in Clerfait's head-quarters at the end of July, found the army in excellent condition, thoroughly refreshed by their long repose, well supplied with provisions, strengthened in numbers, and in all respects ready for action. But when they expressed to the General their surprise at his inactivity, after the orders he had received to attack the French, he asserted with the greatest vehemence and indignation, that he should only have been too glad to lead his troops into action, but that he had never been empowered to advance against the enemy. Sir Morton Eden, the English ambassador in Vienna, a great admirer of Thugut's policy, declared that such treachery was inconceivable. Yet even he could not help reporting to his Government, in March, May and June, that if Prussia did not evacuate Cracow, war would inevitably break out between the two great German Powers. He might, therefore, easily have seen that until the Polish question was settled, no end to the inactivity of Austria was to be looked for. [1]

And thus the French remained in undisturbed possession of the left bank of the Rhine during the whole summer, and there could, of course, be no question of an advance of the Austrians into Franche Comté at a time when Thugut's whole attention was turned towards Cracow, and his whole soul filled with contempt of the Holy Roman Empire. Nothing could have happened more fortunately for the French. The disorganisation of their whole military system, the decrease of their numbers, the destitution of their troops, had now reached such a terrible pitch, that, in spite of the continual pressure exercised by the Committee of Public Safety, not one of their generals dared to take the offensive and to cross the Rhine. And thus they lay in a state of com-

[1] From the despatches of Sir Morton Eden and Col. Crawfurd. Conf. v. Sybel, "Oesterreich und Deutschland im Revolutionskrieg," p. 113.

plete inaction in the conquered and plundered districts of the left bank of the Rhine. The Upper Rhine was occupied by the Rhine and Moselle Army, scarcely 90,000 strong, now under the command of General Pichegru; on the Middle and Lower Rhine stood Jourdan with the army of the Sambre and Meuse in about equal numbers. Even after the capture of Luxemburg, week after week passed away without the slightest movement on the part of Pichegru or Jourdan. Nor was any greater activity displayed by their opponents on the opposite bank—the Austrians, the troops of the Empire, and the *Émigrés*: it seemed as if the forces of the two nations had assembled on the banks of the Rhine to display themselves in peaceful parade. Matters were at the same time carried on a little more briskly, but not more energetically, at the Diet of Ratisbon, where the Estates without exception were filled with a longing for peace, but fluctuated in cruel uncertainty between Prussian and Austrian influences; fearing Austria, because they imputed to her a greater desire of war, and yet not daring to claim the mediation of Prussia, for fear of offending the Emperor. The result was a decree of the Diet, passed in the course of July, which begged the Emperor to mediate a peace, and Prussia to support him in the good work—a decree which in the existing state of alienation between the two Courts had virtually no meaning at all.

The French government regarded the second theatre of war—on which they were measuring swords with Austria—*viz.* Italy, with very different feelings from those with which they looked upon the Rhine. In the former country both parties wishes to keep Savoy, and to wrest Milan from the Austrians. The Independents pursued this object all the more eagerly, because, as we have seen, they were ready, on this condition, to give up Bavaria to the Emperor in return for the left bank of the Rhine. Accordingly they regarded the conquest of Milan as the final effort, by which they hoped to obtain a glorious and advantageous treaty of peace

for the Republic, and they were incessantly exhorting their armies of the Alps and Italy to strike decisive blows. But the military disorganization had made no less progress in that country than on the Rhine; and in spite of the internal discord which continued to cripple the operations of the Austro-Sards, it became evident that the republican generals could not attain their object without very considerable reinforcements. A great levy of recruits in the interior was not to be thought of at that time, and the Committee of Public Safety therefore made up its mind to a new peace, which should render the troops, hitherto employed in the Pyrenees, disposable for the war in the Appennines—*viz.* peace with Spain. [1]

The court of Madrid, as we have already observed, had long lost all pleasure in this destructive and endless war. For a time the Queen and the Minister Godoi, Duke of Alcudia, had enthusiastically favoured the contest, because it seemed to be a vital question for the supremacy of the favourite in opposition to Aranda's love of peace. But since the summer of 1794 the fortune of arms had changed; both in the Eastern and Western Pyrenees the Spaniards had been obliged to evacuate the enemy's territory; nay, in the East, the French general had crossed the frontier, and with his right wing in the mountains had conquered the valleys of Cerdagne, and with his left the protecting forts on the Catalonian coast. These disasters made the deepest impression on the wretched court of Madrid; the Queen saw all her hopes deceived, and Alcudia wavered in utter helplessness between foolish pride and abject fear. In September he made the first step towards a direct negotiation, by causing his wish for peace to be expressed to a certain Simonin,

[1] Conf. for the following, *Barenle, Histoire de la Convention*, the last pages of vol. V.—*Mémoires du roi Joseph*, vol. I.—Correspondence of 1795, and above all Baumgarten's "History of Spain at the time of the French revolution."

who had been sent by the Committee of Public Safety to Barcelona to tend the French prisoners of war. No sooner had this been done, than he received intelligence of the plan of a royalist insurrection in Paris and the South of France, and immediately began to indulge idle hopes of a splendid victory over the Revolution. The Committee of Public Safety on their part answered him in a tone of imperious confidence, and in October the army of the West drove the Spaniards with vigorous blows nearly as far back as Pampeluna. Under the influence of these varying impressions, Godoi, in deep despair, declared to the Cabinet council that no human power could stop the progress of the French. He then once more proposed to England to acknowledge the Count of Provence as Regent of France, and in the middle of November sent an *ultimatum* to Simonin, in which he expressed his readiness to conclude a peace with the French republic, if the latter would liberate the children of Louis XVI., and give up the French provinces bordering on Spain to the Dauphin, as an independent kingdom. The Committee of course expressed the highest indignation at such a proposal, recalled Simonin on the spot from Barcelona, and called upon their generals to reply to the insolence of the Spanish court with cannon balls.

General Dugommier had already acted in accordance with the spirit of these instructions. His incapable adversary, Count de la Union, had buried himself near Figueras in a number of badly planned trenches; on the 17th of November, General Augereau turned the left wing which held the key of the Spanish position. This movement, it is true, came to a stand-still when Dugommier, who was just on the point of opening the contest in the centre, was killed by a cannon ball; but Union allowed the precious hours to pass away without taking any kind of precautions; when, therefore, Dugommier's successor renewed the attack at all points on the 20th, the Spaniards were completely defeated after a short resistance. Continually rolled up from the left, they

lost one position after another; Union himself fell in the *mêlée*, nearly 9,000 officers and soldiers were killed, and eighty entrenchments with 200 guns captured. The rout of the defeated army was so complete, and the consternation of the Spaniards so great, that in eight days General Torres delivered up the immensely strong fortress of Figueras with a garrison of 9,000 men, 170 guns, and a vast store of ammunition and food, without firing a shot.

This great catastrophe called forth, in the first place, a mighty outburst of patriotic enthusiasm in the threatened border province of Catalonia. In the interior of the country the Spaniards were more influenced by their discontent with their own Government, by financial distress and political demoralisation; the taxes were collected with great difficulty, the recruits endeavoured to escape the conscription, and the people, with bitter imprecations, demanded peace. But on the borders, the inhabitants knew no other impulse than that of self preservation and hatred against the French. While the latter had thought that the appearance of their *tricolore* would rouse the Spaniards to revolt against the abuses in Madrid, the latter were filled with a furious abhorrence of the murderers of Louis XVI, the persecutors of the Church, and the blasphemers of Christianity. To this was added the harshness of the Conventional commissioners, the licentiousness of the soldiers, and the ill-treatment of the occupied districts: throughout Catalonia, Navarre, and Biscay, the people demanded arms for the contest against the impious enemy. No one, indeed, had the slightest confidence in the Government at Madrid; on the contrary, after the fall of Figueras, Catalonia wished to withdraw entirely from the orders of the Court, and then to raise 150,000 armed men against the foreign enemy. An open breach was, however, once more avoided; and at last a popular force of 4,000 men was raised, in close cooperation with General Urrutia, the successor of Union, who was fortunately a very able and energetic man. Happily for the Spaniards, the French

general Pérignon, instead of closely pursuing the ruins of the army which had been defeated near Figueras, lost his time in besieging Rosas, a fortress on the coast, which was the first in this campaign to set an example of vigorous resistance, and did not capitulate till the beginning of February; so that Urrutia was enabled to restore order in his shattered regiments on the other side of the river Fluvia, and to organize the arming of the Catalonian peasants on a grand scale.

Whilst in this quarter nation and army were vying with one another in self-sacrifice and activity, the Court of Madrid still afforded the same example of utter frivolity and revolting incapacity. Alcudia forgot the horrors of the defeat of Figueras in a whirl of low pleasures and extravagant dissipation; and when the Minister of Marine, Valdes, strongly urged him to make peace, this was only another reason with the Queen for continuing the war, because it was the first of all considerations with her, that no political adversary should be in the right in opposition to Alcudia. When Tallien, in December, privately sent overtures from Paris, to the effect that Spain might obtain a peace with France without any cession of territory, if she would separate herself from England, Alcudia declined the proposal. He did so on this occasion, not from pride or hope of victory, for in his innermost heart he would have been glad to escape the troubles and annoyances of war; but the Spanish court, as Count de la Caneda said, could not make the exertions necessary for the attainment of peace and a safe neutrality. "The Queen," wrote the Prussian ambassador at that time, "wishes for peace, the King has no will at all, Godoy, young and inexperienced, fancies that war and peace are made with the same means, and looks for a decision I know not whence." Under these circumstances Count Cabarrus, Tallien's father-in-law, was able to continue the negotiation in secret, to which the intelligence received in February of the conquest of Holland, and the departure of Count Golz for Basle,

gave a fresh impulse. Alcudia once more recurred to his old jealousy of England; he had a reconciliation with Valdes, and in a great Cabinet council, held on the 22nd of March, in presence of the King and Queen, the question was formally mooted of concluding a peace with France on the sole condition of the liberation of the two royal children. All persons present signified their lively approval; King Charles alone, who never heard a word before from any one of a peaceful tendency, was highly enraged at the proposal to treat with the abominable regicides; but even he was appeased, when his consort represented to him how many holy chapels had been destroyed during the war, and that the Church itself, therefore, had the greatest need of peace. Don Domingo Yriarte, an able but frivolous man of business, who had been formerly banished from Madrid on account of his Jacobin sympathies, and sent as Ambassador to Poland, was selected to go to Basle, and open negociations of peace with Barthélemy. In the case of any other government than the Spanish, a decided line of conduct would have been hereby taken up, and a definite system adopted. But no sooner was the order sent off to Yriarte than the state of feeling in Madrid once more changed. The impression produced by the conquest of Holland was outweighed by the preliminary intelligence of the Triple alliance between England, Austria and Russia; the example of the Prussian peace lost its weight in consequence of a pretty direct and plain spoken declaration of England, that she would commence a war with Spain as soon as Alcudia had made peace with France. In the midst of these conflicting influences the Duke came to the thoroughly characteristic resolution, that Yriarte should for the present continue his negotiation, but without shewing any too great readiness to make concessions. He thought that a considerable time might thus be spent, during which it was to be hoped that Urrutia would protect the frontier, and England, on her part, be induced to adopt milder measures.

The Committee of Public Safety in Paris, meanwhile, had received the news of Yriarte's mission, at first with some distrust, but finally to the general satisfaction of all parties. The peacefully inclined members of the Committee greeted every step of this nature with unmixed pleasure, and the Independents saw in the conclusion of the Spanish war new means of promoting their more important objects. Barthélemy, therefore, was directed to enter into the negotiation. The details of the instructions he received were, it is true, no less categorical than in the Prussian negotiation. He was to press in every way for a speedy settlement, and was on that account to assume a curt and commanding air, to consent to no armistice, to cut short any mention of internal French affairs—of the children of Louis XVI., the *Émigrés* and the Church; and on all other questions—compensation, frontiers, war expenses, and neutrality—to ask as much as possible, and only to concede as much as was absolutely necessary. It soon appeared how different were the points of view from which the two parties regarded the matter. Barthélemy informed the Spanish ambassador, that the Republic was ready to give up the border districts on the Pyrenees, now occupied by their troops, but demanded in return the cession of Louisiana in America, and the Spanish portion of the island of San Domingo. Yriarte gave a decided refusal to these terms, representing that his Government would never dare to propose to the Spanish people such a humiliating settlement of the question. He then, in his turn, proposed the grant of a pension to the emigrant Princes, free permission to return home for the rest of the *Émigrés*, and a recognition of the Catholic church in France. Whereupon Barthélemy gave him to understand that he was ready to treat on the question of more or less in respect to territory, but that he must consider any further allusion to French domestic concerns as a breaking off of the negotiation. Yriarte was reluctantly compelled to believe that Barthélemy was in earnest, and withdrew those demands.

But he returned all the more vigorously to the other point, which, as he said, was one of honour, religion, and, if they pleased, of fanaticism,—*viz.* the fate of the imprisoned children in the Temple. These conversations were carried on for weeks. In vain did Barthélemy point out to him that it was impossible for the Republic to trust so dangerous a Pretender to the hands of a foreign government. Yriarte, with equal emphasis, declared that his King could not possibly pass over in neglect and silence the fate of his nearest and greatest kinsman. Between these two principles no compromise was possible.

And thus the death of the unhappy boy was of no less moment for the foreign affairs, than for the internal politics, of France. The Committee sent word to Barthélemy, that in the sitting of the 9th of June the Convention had heard of the death of the young Capet with the greatest indifference, and of the taking of Luxemburg with lively enthusiasm. Yriarte expressed his deep sorrow at this news but it was evident that the real negotiation of peace could now for the first time begin. There were still considerable differences between the two Powers, but none which might not be got over by good will on either side. Yriarte's first words, after the brother had escaped by death from the sphere of human disputes, were directed to the liberation of the sister, the last member of the royal family. The Committee had, indeed, in her case no political scruples with respect to the safety of the republican Constitution; but their national pride rendered them averse to make such a concession to the demands of a foreign government. They therefore anticipated the Spanish request, by proposing to the Convention to ask the Emperor Francis to take the Princess in exchange for the Deputies who were formerly delivered up by Dumouriez to the Austrians. No one could doubt that the Cabinet of Vienna would gladly consent to this arrangement—and the exchange was really carried out a few months later, without much trouble. Barthélemy, therefore, was able to declare

to the Spanish ambassador, that the liberation of the Princess could no longer form a subject of deliberation between them, as the Convention was already negotiating with Austria on this very point. This matter being settled, they now came to the real political part of their work. In this too they met with several difficulties. France insisted on the cession of Louisiana and San Domingo, which the Spanish plenipotentiary refused to discuss. Spain desired to be acknowledged as mediator between the Republic and the Italian States, especially the Pope; while Barthélemy had received express orders not to allow any mention to be made of Italy. As the predominance of the French arms in the Pyrenees became more decided every day, the Committee of Public Safety would perhaps under such circumstances have broken off the negotiation; but it was now that the above mentioned considerations respecting Austria and Italy made themselves heard, and the Committee adhered to the resolution to do their utmost to obtain a peace with Spain, with a view to strengthen the Army of Italy.

While hitherto the heaviest blows had been dealt in the Eastern Pyrenees, the chief weight was now to be thrown into the Army of the West, in Guipuscoa and Biscay, where they might expect to surprise the Spaniards in an unprepared state, and gain considerable advantages without serious difficulty. Then, they hoped, the Government at Madrid would consent to a peace, and the Army of the East might be transferred to Italy, and there bring matters to a decision with Austria and Europe.

General Moncey, who had at that time commanded the Army of the West Pyrenees, received instructions to this effect together with reinforcements. He had about 40,000 men under his command, and scarcely 30,000 Spaniards under Castel-Franco opposed to him; and as the latter had to protect Navarre on the one side, and Biscay on the other, against the French, his forces were widely separated from one another. At the end of June Moncey first attacked the

Biscayan corps of the enemy under General Crespo, and having forced the passage of the border river Deba, he threw a considerable portion of his forces on the Spanish division in Navarre, drove them far into the interior of the country, and thereby totally destroyed their communications with their brethren in arms in Biscay. After this, Crespo was unable to offer any considerable resistance to the advancing foe; on the one side, the French reached Vittoria, and soon afterwards the Castilian frontier on the Ebro, and on the other side, occupied the city of Bilboa, the capital of Biscay. The terror produced by these movements on the Government of Madrid was great and decisive. Although General Urrutia in Catalonia had engaged Scherer, the new French General of the Army of the East, in a bloody and successful battle; although General Cuesta had made considerable progress in the Cerdagne against the Republicans, the court of Madrid, immediately after Moncey's victories, sent milder instructions to their agents at Basle.

The peace was thereupon signed by Barthélemy and Yriarte on the 22nd of July. France gave up her claim to Louisiana, and Spain, on her side, ceded her portion of San Domingo to the French. France agreed to the Spanish mediation in a future negotiation of peace with Naples, Parma, and Portugal. With respect to the other Italian states—by which, according to a secret article, the Pope was especially understood—France accepted the good offices of Spain. The feeling at Madrid underwent such a complete change, when the first sacrifice had once been made, that immediately after the signing of the peace, Yriarte expressed the wish of his Court to renew the old Bourbon alliance between the two States; in order, as he said, to break by their united power the preponderance of England in the Mediterranean, and of the Austrians in Italy.

All parties in Paris were highly delighted with this result. The people at large, and the Moderate party, rejoiced in the fact *per se*, that another great theatre of war was closed;

the Independents looked with satisfaction at the more distant consequences which would arise for their plans, from the setting free of the Army of the Pyrenees. "My offensive plans," wrote Bonaparte, "have been sanctioned; we shall soon see important events in Lombardy; Sardinia will doubtless think of peace, and it only depends upon us to come to terms forthwith, even with the Emperor." 'But,' he added, 'we demand of him very advantageous conditions, which we intend to obtain by force of arms.'"

Whilst the Spanish treaty was no doubt, in its immediate effects, a gain to the revolutionary and aggressive party, events had taken place at the same time at home, which weakened the influence of the Moderates and gave a decided direction to the policy of the Convention.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROYALISTS.

Persecution of the Jacobins in the south.—Royalist agents in Paris.—New dissensions in Bretagne and La Vendée.—Puisaye in England prepares a landing of émigrés on the coast of France.—War breaks out in Bretagne.—The expedition of the émigrés sets sail.—Perverse measures and internal dissensions of the émigrés.—Charette declares war against the republic.—Fresh intrigues of the agents in Paris.—Landing of the émigrés.—They allow themselves to be shut up by Hoche in the peninsula of Quiberon.—Hoche takes the fort of Penthièvre.—The émigrés are overpowered.—Tallien's report. Bloody tribunal in Auray.—Continuance of the war by the Chouans and Charette.—The comte d'Artois lands on the island d'Yeu.—He is afraid to set foot on the mainland. Despair of Charette.

While the Republic was gaining victory after victory abroad through the disunion and faintheartedness of its enemies, the Government was no longer able to control the turbulence of parties at home, or to obtain for the advantage of the country a strong and independent position. Whoever tries to make a revolution, will always aim at the utter destruction of every adversary; and whoever wishes to close it, must endeavour, before all things, to reconcile contending parties. At that period—the summer of 1795,—the ears both of the friends and enemies of the Revolution rang with the fearful watch-word of the Reign of Terror; "half measures in revolutionary times are fatal—to draw back a single step is destruction—the dead alone never return." Whoever had the upper hand, therefore, for the moment, thought himself

obliged to secure his advantage by the total destruction of his opponents; every success was followed by increased violence, wilder outbreaks of passion, and more desperate resistance. During the prevalence of such feelings, the position of the moderate parties necessarily became more unfavourable; the extreme factions of the Right and Left gained more and more exclusive possession of the field.

The 1st of Prairial had given a new impulse throughout France to the tide which had set in against the Jacobins. Men were not everywhere contented, as in the Convention, with combating Jacobin laws, or arresting Jacobin leaders. We know how rabid was the thirst for restitution and revenge in the Departments of the South; and immediately after the Toulonese revolt, this feeling found vent in the most atrocious crimes. Some hundreds of Terrorists had been locked up in Fort St. Jean at Marseilles. During the troubles at Toulon the Marseillais were apprehensive that on the arrival of the Toulonese, these prisoners would make common cause with the latter; as soon, therefore, as Toulon was taken, the chiefs of the *Compagnie du Soleil* resolved to free themselves from such dangers for the future, by a single deed of blood. On the 5th of June a crowd of armed men surprised the fort; the small guard at the entrance was quickly overpowered, the officer in command seized and confined, and then one prison after another broken open and its inmates massacred. The butchery lasted nearly the whole day, and when the strong prison doors resisted even the axes of the assailants, they shattered them with cannon, and shot down the prisoners with volleys of musketry. Towards the evening the murderers were tired out, and some of them intoxicated; and in order to facilitate their horrid task they threw great bundles of straw through the broken windows of the prison, kindled it, and left the prisoners to be burnt alive. It was not until night had fallen that the Conventional commissioners came from the town, accompanied by torch-bearers and national guards. They reasoned with the assassins, and

exhorted them to quiet, and obedience to the law,[1] and at last induced them to withdraw, after some of the ring-leaders had been arrested, and their arms restored to the guard of the fort. The number of slain according to the official list was 86; according to other statements more than 200. Several days elapsed before medical assistance was sent to the wounded, after most of them had perished; the captured murderers were liberated a few days afterwards without any examination.

Still worse than the horrid deed itself was the satisfaction with which the population, far and wide throughout the land, received the intelligence of it. By the long continued horrors of the Reign of Terror all moral feelings had been brutalized, and all ideas of right and wrong destroyed. Similar excesses to those of Marseilles took place in all parts of the South. In Avignon the hand of the blood avenger overtook the murderers of *la Glacière;* in Sisteron and in Digne the officials of the Jacobin administration, and the members of the Revolutionary committees, were cut down. In Tarrascon the victims were thrown from a lofty tower on to the sharp rocks of the Rhone banks; and for three months, both there and in Lyons, similar atrocities were practised. Originally these murderous deeds were the results of no political tendencies, but exclusively of avenging wrath against the bloody ministers of the Reign of Terror. When, however, such scenes became more frequent, and were enacted in every part of twenty Departments, political parties began to found their hopes on the wide spread agitation of the popular mind. In several quarters royalists of the old stamp began to bestir themselves; numerous members of the first emigration of the noblesse returned to Lyons or

[1] According to the account given by the Duke of Montpensier, brother of Louis Phillippe, who was present at the time, and who certainly deserves more credit than the subsequent exaggerated statements of Fréron.

Marseilles, where, as we know, the non-juring priests had always possessed very considerable influence. In Lyons these tendencies were followed with so little consideration, that the Convention, which since the 1st of Prairial had shown little inclination to act with severity against the enemies of the Jacóbins, was at last obliged to interfere. They summoned the local Authorities before their bar, transferred the police administration to the Military authorities, and disarmed the National guard; these measures were carried out without any resistance, but the intrigues of the Royalists, and the persecution of the Jacobins, were by no means stopped.

In Paris, too, a more and more clearly defined party of Bourbon-royalists was formed within the great monarchical-constitutional opposition which we have already described. It was composed of numerous and heterogeneous elements—a considerable portion of the *Jeunesse dorée*, former members of the first States General, and a number of peaceable and liberal citizens. The latter were of opinion, that as France had, once for all, need of monarchy, she must not be afraid of a handful of *Émigrés*, but, now that the Dauphin was dead, must acknowlege the next heir, Louis XVIII., the eldest brother of the King, who was then residing in Verona. They did not, however, contemplate an immediate restoration by violent means; they intended to wait the results of the new constitution and the future elections, and hoped, without recourse to arms, to recall the Bourbons by a decree of the legislative body. But by their side were hotter heads, who observing the universal abhorrence which prevailed of the Jacobins, looked every day for an insurrection in favour of the legitimate rightful monarch, and hoped for a complete return to the *ancien régime*. It was indeed impossible to make a greater mistake respecting the real wishes of the people; but, as usual, want of discernment by no means checked the restless zeal of these ardent partisans. They canvassed and agitated, corresponded and conspired, kept

up an understanding with Tallien and other Thermidorians, bestirred themselves in the Sectional assemblies, despatched letters to Louis XVIII. at Verona, to the *Émigrés* in the Austrian army, and to Charette and Cormantin in the West. Since November, 1794, the Court at Verona had formed a Royal agency, consisting of the Abbé Brottier, the Abbé Lemaitre, and the Chevelier Despomelles. The most active of these was Brottier, of whom his colleague Maury was accustomed to say: "if you wish to throw a matter into inextricable confusion, place it in the hands of Brottier; he could rouse the angels of heaven to revolt before the throne of God." Like all politicians of his stamp, and especially the greater part of the noble *Émigrés*, he was a man of the narrowest fanaticism, and the most unbounded credulity. He imagined that he had a fourth part of the Conventional deputies at his disposal. He regarded the Constitutionalists as almost more worthy of death than the bloodiest Jacobin, and after the peace of La Jaunais he denounced Charette as an equally insignificant and untrustworthy man. Not many weeks afterwards, however, he heard that Louis XVIII. had written a letter to the General of the Vendeans, full of grateful admiration; and as the peace in La Vendée seemed by no means to rest on a secure basis, he immediately sketched a plan, according to which the West was to rise again under the command of the "unrivalled" Charette, while Précy, the defender of Lyons, was to raise the royal standard at the same time in the South, the Prince of Condé to conduct his troops through Switzerland into Dauphiné, and the friends of the monarchy in Paris to put a terrible end to the Convention. With regard to Foreign powers, he hated the English as the cold and selfish hereditary enemies of France, and told Louis XVIII., in 1795, that the only trustworthy monarch, whose assistance the *Émigrés* could claim with honour and advantage, was the King of Spain.

Visionary and futile as were these views and projects, affairs in La Vendée and Bretagne really assumed a very serious aspect immediately after the conclusion of the peace. From the very first day mutual complaints were made of breaches of treaty. If we examine the numerous documents[1] relating to these affairs, we find no sufficient data on which to found a judicial decision on the merits of the case; but the following facts are undoubted. The Republican leaders, the Committee of Public Safety, and the negotiating Commissioners, wished to preserve peace. They appointed members of their own party, exclusively, as officials, but they took all possible care to select moderate and upright men. They strained every nerve to accustom both officers and men to order and discipline, and to make them maintain a rational and peaceable attitude. When their Generals complained of the refractory conduct of the Vendeans, they constantly replied by warning them to have nothing to do with the Terrorists. In the beginning the same thing may be said of the Royalist as of the Republican chiefs. Charette and Stofflet in La Vendée, and Cormatin in Bretagne, had no desire to see the dreadful civil war break out into fresh flames; they reposed no sort of confidence in their adversaries, after their former experiences, but they hoped for a general change in affairs, which would free them from the Convention without further contest. But in spite of the sentiments of their leaders, it was infinitely difficult in the long run to maintain the peace. In the face of the military superiority of the insurgents, the Conventional commissioners

[1] The Republican documents are to be found in the greatest completeness in the *Guerres des Vendéens*, Vol. V, and the Royalist documents in Cretineau Jolly, *Vendée militaire*, Vol. II and III. The spurious papers must, of course, be discarded, especially the pretended manifesto of the Vendean chiefs of the 22nd of June, which Cretineau credulously adopts, though its spuriousness is rendered glaringly evident by the signatures of Stofflet and Bernier.

could not think of demanding that the peasants should give up their arms. On the contrary, after an agreement had been come to, that 2,000 men were to remain under arms in La Vendée, in the pay of the Republic, they had themselves informed General Charette, by word of mouth, that he might quarter his best troops there, and command them as before. But if the peasants kept their arms, and Charette held a command, the royalist army was virtually retained without change, since even during the war the peasants had never been united into a standing army, but had held themselves in readiness to obey the beck of Charette. There were still as before two entirely independent bodies of troops, exasperated to the utmost against one another by a long and merciless war. Both sides were fanatical in the extreme, both brutalised by a desperate civil war, and accustomed to a lax and ill-regulated discipline. The Republican officers were indignant that the chiefs of the peasants, after acknowledging the Republic, continued to call themselves Generals, Colonels, and Majors, and that there were, within the State, bodies of troops besides those belonging to the State. Then again there were in Bretagne several dreaded chiefs who had never accepted the peace of La Mabilais, and who continued their former operations of persecuting the officers of government, plundering the mails, and attacking small companies of soldiers. In La Vendée the deep and universal respect felt towards Charette and Stofflet had prevented such occurrences for a time; but in May the Parisian agency interfered, and the Abbé Brottier issued instructions in the King's name to several of the Royalist chiefs, to recommence hostilities. And thus the country was gradually filled with petty but ever-increasing differences, and mutual complaints. Republican soldiers ill-treated individual peasants, and the latter, on the first opportunity, took revenge, and shot down the Republicans. The villagers refused to bring their provisions to market in return for *assignats*; the generals who saw their soldiers

tormented by hunger, threatened to take the corn by force. The peasants then carried off their stocks to their old hiding places in the woods, and encamped in arms; whereupon reports were sent to the Committee of Public Safety, that the Royalists were forming magazines, and collecting seditious bands, and trying to starve the Republicans. One of the greatest difficulties arose from the democratic inhabitants who had been obliged to flee the country during the war, and to seek the protection of the Republican armies. When they now returned, trusting to the peace, they found their houses and lands occupied by the Royalists, and themselves rejected as Terrorists and Robespierreists; and when they appealed to the Authorities to be restored to their property, the new possessor invariably took up arms against them.

Such a state of things could not possibly continue. Either the peasants must be disarmed, or the Republicans must entirely evacuate the country. This would have been unavoidable even with the most honest intentions on either side, and in the most peaceable state of the world. What then could be expected when nothing but hatred and mistrust prevailed on both sides, and urgent appeals were made to them to renew the contest! Count Puisaye was actively employed for eight months in England, in trying to induce the British government to lend a powerful support to the Royalists. At first he had no small difficulty to overcome, for the *Émigrés*, by their ostentatious boasting and the ignominious failure of all their promises, had forfeited all credit in Europe, and had alienated the English government more than any other by their fanatical abhorrence of all liberal and constitutional principles. Puisaye, who had himself been a member of the Constituent assembly, and subsequently an ally of the Girondists, was, however, just the right man to inspire the English ministers with a more favourable feeling with regard to the political question; and he completely succeeded in gaining over Pitt, and Windham, the Minister at war, to his views. The treaties of La Jaunais

and La Mabilais did not alter his views; he declared that as soon as the English expedition should appear on the Breton coast, the whole country would immediately rise in arms; and we now know what good reasons he had for his assertion. He continually repeated that the undertaking must have a national character; that England, consequently, ought to confine herself to lending it support by her fleet, and supplying arms and money; and that the troops for landing should consist entirely of French *Émigrés*. Pitt granted all that he asked. Colossal supplies of uniforms, muskets and ammunition, were collected, and Puisaye's summons was sent to the *Émigrés* through the whole of Europe, to assemble in the English harbours for the intended expedition. They quickly came from all quarters; in Cowes Count d'Hervilly assembled about 1,500, and the English Colonel Nesbitt raised about an equal number on German ground in Bremen and Stade. It was an unfortunate idea of the English ministers to strengthen these troops by recruiting from among the French prisoners of war in England. D'Hervilly, an old soldier, and a strict royalist, warned them against burdening the expedition with such untrustworthy elements; but Pitt thought that there was no need to be so particular in battle, and more than 1,600 prisoners were enrolled among the landing force. These preparations had been carried on since April with ever-increasing activity.

Meanwhile the disputes in Bretagne and La Vendée grew hotter every day. The Royalist chiefs kept their men more closely in hand; in the month of May most of them had issued formal orders to the districts, forbidding the inhabitants, under heavy penalties, to receive *assignats* or to carry provisions into the Republican garrisons. The latter were thereby compelled to procure their supplies by main force; several engagements took place, and some of the Royalist leaders were shot or taken prisoners. The Generals Hoche and Aubert repeatedly sent word to Paris that the peace was

a mischievous delusion; and that the most energetic measures were necessary to save the Republic. The state of things in La Vendée was not much better, General Canclaux, who commanded there, though he did not speak out so plainly as his colleagues in Bretagne, expressed very strong apprehensions. In the course of the month of May, a change took place in the Conventional commissioners in Bretagne. The peacemakers were replaced by some old Montagnards, who belonged to the party of the Independents. Hoche more than once consulted them as to the necessity of taking some decided step, and securing some of the more prominent leaders, and above all Cormatin, by sudden arrest. He did Cormatin great injustice. While the Republican general was denouncing him as the essence of the darkest treachery, his own party, whom he was incessantly trying to moderate and hold back, regarded him almost in the light of a traitor. Whilst the Chouans of Lisieux were calling on the inhabitants to remain under arms, and, if necessary, to die for King, Church and Country, Cormatin was warning the Royalist *conseil* of Morbihan against any premature step, which might irretrievably ruin the good cause, since they no longer formed an isolated faction, but stood in close connection with all the Royalists in France, and ought to regulate their proceedings by the decisions of the whole party. These very letters were intercepted by the Republican flying patrols, and served General Hoche as speaking proofs of a well considered plot. At his urgent request the Conventional commissioners reported to the Committee of Public Safety, that in their opinion the arrest of the chiefs could not be any longer delayed. The Committee received this despatch on the 30th of May, a week after the 1st of Prairial, under circumstances which made the struggle with the Jacobins appear much more urgent to them than the breach with the Royalists. They replied, therefore, in very vague terms, that they felt all the necessity of vigorous measures, but that the authenticity of the intercepted letters must first

be proved, and that the generals must be sure of having adequate forces before proceeding to act.

But General Hoche had not waited for the answer of his Government. On the 25th of May he had already extorted from the Commissioners an order for the arrest of all the leaders of royalist bands whom the army could get hold of. Eight of them, among whom was Cormatin, were surprised and seized, and during the following days several divisions of the Chouans were dispersed. A proclamation of the General then threatened certain destruction to all who were found in arms, but promised to the peaceable inhabitants protection, safety, and the free exercise of their religious worship. Thirty-two light columns began to march through the country, and the flames of war blazed up again with fresh fury through the whole of Bretagne. It was characteristic of the condition of the country that all these decisive steps were taken by the military authorities without the previous knowledge of the Government. It was not until the 16th of June that the Committee made a report to the Convention,—which was little more than a repetition of Hoche's proclamation,—and proposed the simple ratification of the *fait accompli*.

The intelligence of this breach was received, of course, with the greatest joy in London and Cowes. Nothing was of more vital importance to the projected expedition than the active participation of the Royalists in the country itself. The Marquis de Rivière had been for several weeks with Charette, for the purpose of inducing him to renew the contest, and it was now to be hoped that the fire which was burning in Bretagne would of itself spread to La Vendée. Charette had at first given the Marquis a very cool reception, and shown a degree of vexation and jealousy when the envoy named Count Puisaye to him as Commander-in-chief of the expedition. The General said, that considering his own services he thought that no one could dispute the leadership with himself, and least of all a man of such luke-

warm and suspicious principles as that liberal ex-member of the Constituent assembly, and friend of the Girondists. But after the outbreak in Bretagne he became more tractable, and promised a new insurrection against the Republic as soon as the expedition appeared on the coast of France. It was, therefore, resolved in London to commence operations. The landing squadron consisted of eight frigates, and ten smaller vessels, under the command of Sir John Warren; it carried the first division of *Émigrés* consisting of 3,500 men under Count d'Hervilly, together with 22,000 uniforms, 30,000 muskets, 19 pieces of cannon, and 600 cwt. of powder [1]; the transports were accompanied by Admiral Bridport with a fleet of 15 ships of the line. At the same time, with the view of dividing the attention and the forces of the enemy, Sir Sydney Smith alarmed the coast of Normandy, and Sir Robert Strachan the North coast of Bretagne; while Bridport and Warren, running out from Cowes, on the 10th of June, took their course to the Bay of Quiberon, on the Southern coast of the same province. When they were well out at sea, Puisaye opened the final instruction which he had received from Windham, the English minister at war, and which gave him the command of the whole expedition, and directed the English admirals to support him everywhere according to his wishes. Unfortunately Windham had forgotten to add equally stringent orders to the Count d'Hervilly; and the latter, narrowminded and self-willed, like most of the emigrant nobles, immediately declared that he, too, had his own

[1] Provision, says Puisaye, for 6,000 men for 3 months. Louis Blanc, who on this occasion, as usual, dwells on the "*Macchiavellism*" of Pitt, is surprised that Puisaye soon afterwards announces to the English ministry, that there was a great want of all necessaries. They had at that time to feed 14,000 Chouans besides the 3,500 *Émigrés*, and they wished to extend the insurrection; it was no wonder, then, that a deficiency was experienced on all hands, especially, as, according to Puisaye, the aristocratic *Émigrés* were insatiable, and, from the want of all regular administration, the supplies were miserably wasted.

instructions from the Ministry, which directed him not to imperil his regiments by a too rash advance into the interior, before he had secured a safe line of retreat. In spite of all representations he adhered to his resolution, declaring that he was answerable for the fulfilment of these orders, and, therefore, reserved for himself perfect freedom of action, and must regard himself, not as the subordinate, but as the colleague of Puisaye.

Such discord between the heads of the expedition was not promising for its success. But the same narrow and violent fanaticism in the royalist party generally produced far worse results, by which the seal of failure was impressed beforehand on all their projects.

In the present political exhaustion and apathy of the popular masses, in which no other feeling prevailed than that of abhorrence against the Jacobins, and a longing after social order, the Bourbon princes really had at this period the most favourable prospects. If they had made up their minds to assume a truly royal position above the parties, to greet every man as a friend who was not an adversary, and to guarantee the results of the Revolution, they would have had nine-tenths of the population on their side. A promise of a liberal constitution, an unconditional amnesty for all political events of the revolutionary period, a confirmation of the abolition of tithes and feudal privileges, a guarantee of the new titles to property on condition of compensation to the *Émigrés*—words like these in the mouth of Louis XVIII.; would have gained for him the speedy adhesion of the French nation. But instead of this what was done?

At the very moment in which the expedition set sail for Quiberon, a memorial of the Count d'Entraigues, one of Louis XVIII.'s most confidential advisers, appeared in Paris, in which all the Constitutionalists were denounced as worse, because less open, sinners than the Jacobins, and declared worthy of the rack and the gallows. In the ranks of the Emigration itself, all the advocates of liberal concessions

were treated with derision and scorn. Count Montlosier wrote that the Constitutional companions of his exile were laden with more crimes than Marat and Robespierre, and pamphlet after pamphlet announced to the French people, that the great day of reckoning was dawning on all the adherents of revolutionary principles, without any distinction. The Constitutionalists in Paris were in the greatest consternation. While the Thermidorians courted their favour by every means, and overhelmed them with the warmest assurances of their regard, they found themselves threatened with every imaginable abuse and injury by the friends and counsellors of the Bourbons. There was one unanimous sentiment among the masses in Paris, that they must first of all repel the attack with which they were threatened from abroad, and then close the Revolution by their own strength. Before Puisaye had set foot on the coast of France, the public feeling of the country towards him had become one of deadly hatred.

And this was by no means the worst. The Abbé Brottier and his agents regarded Puisaye with the same feelings as Charette. The Abbé had been out of temper with him and his plans from the very first, because Puisaye founded them on the assistance of the detested English. In May, Lemaitre had himself gone to England, and had convinced himself that Puisaye did in fact still cherish the same insane liberal ideas as before. Brottier immediately wrote to the Count d'Artois to warn him against Puisaye. He announced to the Prince that Puisaye meditated no less a crime than raising the Duke of York to the throne of France instead of Louis XVIII. This calumny drew from the Prince, it is true, the declaration that Puisaye was as odious to him as Robespierre himself, but as the English government continued to support Puisaye, Brottier then turned to Charette, and informed him, in the name of the King, that the attack on Quiberon was only a feint to deceive the enemy, that the real landing would take place on the

coast of La Vendée, and that, consequently, Charette was to wait for this, and not to leave the limits of his own province. The more this prospect flattered the personal ambition of the General, the more certain was Brottier's success; and he thus deprived Puisaye and his followers of the perhaps decisive cooperation of La Vendée. The second leader of La Vendée, Stofflet, was jealous of Charette, as the latter was of Puisaye. He hesitated whether to follow the example of Charette, or maintain the peace; in this uncertain mood he was caught in the toils of another intrigue, to the destruction of all. Besides Brottier and his friends there was in Paris a second Royalist "Agency," by which even Louis XVIII. himself was suspected of liberal proclivities, and which set all its hopes on the only untainted Prince, Charles d'Artois, whom it designed to make King instead of his brother. Louis XVIII. had just created Charette, lieutenant-general, by a highly flattering autograph letter; Stofflet was deeply vexed in his secret heart by the honour done to his rival, and in this state of mind easily allowed himself to be induced by the Parisian agents to separate his cause from that of Louis and the new lieutenant-general, and to remain neutral between the combatants. Meanwhile Brottier had carried these wretched intrigues into Bretagne also. He sent alleged instructions from Louis XVIII. to all the leaders of the Chouans, not to assemble their bands, and to avoid all collision with the Republicans. He was not obeyed by all, but by most of the chiefs; and thus a royalist fanatic, at the very time that the English fleet was transporting a troop of *Émigrés* to the shores of France, was disarming the royalists by whose help alone the undertaking could be rendered successful!

On the 22nd of June Sir John Warren sighted the French coast at Lorient, and, at the same time, the republican fleet of 14 ships of the line under Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse. He hastened to signal the intelligence to Admiral Bridport who had been somewhat delayed by contrary winds, but

who now came with all possible speed, and began the engagement against Villaret-Joyeuse with the greatest impetuosity. After a short but violent cannonade he succeeded in breaking through the centre of the French line, whereupon the greater number of the enemy's vessels fled in all haste to the harbour, but three ships of the line were surrounded and taken by the English, after a very brave resistance. The way was thus opened for the expedition, and, on the 25th, Sir John Warren dropped anchor between the Gulf of Morbihan and the peninsula of Quiberon. Favourable intelligence was brought of the disposition of the population, whose spirits were further raised by the news of the defeat of the Republican fleet; nevertheless d'Hervilly could not be induced to land without previous reconnoitring, and thus the disembarcation was delayed until the 27th of June. The Chouans of Morbihan, more than 10,000 men, led by Georges Cadoudal, Bois-Berthelot, and the Chevalier Tinteniac, were all astir, and while the *Émigrés* were landing, they drove back the nearest republican outposts to Auray and Landevan. Puisaye immediately arranged them in three divisions, and sent them forward on the 28th to the above named places. These movements were attended with complete success; the Chouans occupied Auray, and pushed forward their van as far as Vannes. These first advances had a powerful effect on the feeling of the country, and threw the Republican authorities and National guards of the neighbourhood into the greatest consternation. The troops of the Republicans, as we have seen, were scattered in small columns far and wide through the province; a resolute advance of the Royalists *en masse* might have developed the insurrection throughout the whole of Bretagne.

General Hoche preserved in this crisis the same confidence, clearness and boldness, by which he had determined the fate of the campaign of 1793 on the Rhine. Everything depended on not allowing the enemy to obtain the advantage of moral superiority, and at any cost to stop the conflagration from

spreading any farther. He wrote to Canclaux and Aubert-Dubayer for speedy reinforcement; he instructed the commandants in Lorient and Brest to defend those places to the last drop of blood; and he ordered his officers of every division, to send him every man whom they could spare with all speed to Auray; and, moreover, he collected all the forces in his own neighbourhood—somewhat more than 2,000 men—and with these, regardless of the disproportion of numbers, he fell upon the Chouans in Vannes on the evening of the 28th. He drove them out of the town, and pursued them as far as Auray, but was too weak to overpower the troops of Bois-Berthelot, which were stationed there. Puisaye, on his side, urgently called on Count d'Hervilly to unite all his forces for the destruction of the most dangerous enemy; but d'Hervilly adhered to his resolution of securing a safe line of retreat before venturing a single step into the interior. He therefore kept his regiments together on the coast, and, on the 29th, supported by the English gun-boats, began an attack on the neighbouring peninsula of Quiberon. This is a tongue of land three leagues long and half a league broad, sandy and barren, without trees or springs, and inhabited only by a few fishermen. Its narrowest part is just where it joins the mainland, and at this point stands Fort Penthièvre, nearly occupying the whole breadth, with a garrison of 700 men, who, after a feeble resistance, laid down their arms on the 3rd of July, and for the most part took service in the battalions of the *Émigrés*. But during these days Hoche had increased his force to 5,000 men, and at the very same time in which d'Hervilly took the peninsula, the French general overpowered the positions of the Chouans in Auray and Landevan. The peasants were furious with d'Hervilly for leaving them without support, and made direct complaints to Puisaye of treachery. D'Hervilly, on the other hand, received urgent despatches from the Abbé Brottier, in which he was directed to delay and gain time, until a clearer insight could be ob-

tained into Puisaye's highly suspicious plans. When, therefore, the latter earnestly besought him to attack the troops of Hoche with all his forces, he remained for a time reserved and silent, and at last, without listening to any objections, decided that the whole army should retreat to the tongue of land, under cover of Fort Penthiévre and the English cannon-boats, and there await further instructions from London.

This was certain destruction; it was giving up the only chance of victory, which lay in the union of all the Bretons; it was giving the Republicans time to bring up a superior force with which they could crush the handful of *Émigrés* at their pleasure. The Chouans in the army were well aware of this, and while a number of them dispersed to their homes, the others marched in a state of dull depression—surrounded by weeping women and children from all the neighbouring places—into the peninsula, where 20,000 persons were now crowded together, without the posibility of getting food or shelter. Puisaye and d'Hervilly passed three days in angry debate. At last, on the 17th, the Chouan officers with great difficulty effected a compromise between them. A plan of battle was agreed upon at the instigation of d'Hervilly, according to which two divisions of Chouans, who had just been transported on English vessels to different parts of the coast, were to unite in the interior of the country, and surprise the republican camp in the rear; while a third body of peasants attacked it in the flank, and the *Émigrés* in the front. It was a singular kind of strategy which thus crumbled their forces without any definite object, and deferred their reunion until the enemy would be certain to be in superior numbers. For amongst the Republicans all was zeal, activity, and energy. The Convention sent two members of the Committee of Public Safety, Tallien and Blad, with unlimited powers. Aubert-Dubayet and Canclaux sent troops and ammunition; by the middle of the month Hoche had united more than 15,000 men in

his camp at St. Barbe, which closed the narrow mouth of the isthmus, and had fortified his position with considerable earthworks and well mounted redoubts. All the efforts of the Royalists shivered to fragments against his rock-like resolution. The two bodies of men—of about 3,500 each—which had left Quiberon on the 17th under Tinteniac and Jean-Jean,—wandered about the country, were drawn into skirmishes, and perpetually impeded by deceitful instructions from the Parisian Agency. At last Tinteniac fell to an unimportant engagement, and the peasants dispersed in the woods. The third body under Count Vauban, who was to have landed on the night of the 16th at Carnac, was not more successful; and thus, on the decisive morning, d'Hervilly found himself alone with his 3,500 *Émigrés* opposed to an enemy of four times his numbers. His regiments rushed to the attack with a gallant contempt of death; but the fire of the hostile batteries sufficed to crush their thin ranks, and at once to destroy all hope. D'Hervilly himself was mortally wounded; retreat was unavoidable, and only the broadsides of the English ships which swept the whole surface of the peninsula, kept the Republicans from entering Fort Penthiévre with the vanquished *Émigrés*. In the midst of this confusion the second division of *Émigrés* landed, 1,500 in number, having just arrived from England under the young Count Sombreuil. Unable to change the fortune of the day, they were only fated to increase the number of the miserable victims.

Fort Penthiévre, the only barrier which still kept the Republicans from Quiberon, could not long have held out against a regular siege. But it did not even come to that. Those Republican prisoners of war, who had been drafted into the regiments in England, deserted in crowds to their old colours. One of them, Sergeant Goujon, an intelligent and experienced soldier, came to Hoche on the 19th and laid a plan before him for surprising the fort by a nocturnal attack. Accordingly the columns of the Republicans began

to move on the 20th, shortly before midnight. The Fort was washed on both sides at high tide by the waves of the sea; but the ebb left narrow stripes of dry land to the right and left, and by these the troops were to steal between the batteries of the Fort and the dashing waves, and then to climb the weakly guarded rear of the fortress. Hoche himself, accompanied by Tallien and Blad, approached the front of the Fort with a third division, to be in readiness to support his comrades. The sky was hung with heavy clouds, and the night as dark as the assailants could wish for their purpose. But just as they reached the coast, a tremendous storm came on, with torrents of rain, so that for a full hour they did not venture to stir a step. The wind lashed the waves of the ocean and drove them before it, so that they beat upon the shore with a roaring sound, and when the troops at last began to advance, the path along the coast was entirely covered by the billows. The column on the left, under General Humbert, came to a stand-still; but, on the right, Goujon insisted upon it that he knew the ground, and would find his way; and General Menage led his men through the raging of the thunder and the rain, and through the darkness of the night, into the stormy waves. They were up to the middle in water—at every step they had to contend with wind and tide—yet with noiseless exertion they made their way one behind another through the midst of a thousand perils. At last they got through the water, and stood on dry ground in the rear of the Fort, at the foot of the rampart. Those deserters had learned from the comrades who remained behind, the watchword of the garrison, and reached the platform of the rampart without difficulty. Then, however, an alarm was raised, some shots were fired, and the whole garrison was roused. In front of the Fort the gunners observed the approach of the main column of the enemy, by the grey light of the morning, and opened such a rapid and murderous fire upon them, that their ranks were broken, and Hoche, suspecting treachery, gave

orders to retreat. But suddenly the cannonade ceased, and when Hoche looked back he saw with joyful surprise that the tricolor was floating from the summit of the Fort. Menage had cut down all that opposed him; some hundreds of deserters joined his men; the royalist gunners were killed at their guns, and Penthiévre was in the hands of the Republicans.

The expedition had now hopelessly failed. There was not a single spot on the neck of land at which the Royalists could withstand the enemy, now three times their number and secure of victory. The *Émigrés* retreated hopeless and in disorder to the extreme point of the peninsula, with no other prospect than that the English might, perhaps, be aware of their position and send off boats to their succour. But several hours passed before Sir John Warren could be informed of the loss of the Fort,[1] and how would it be possible to carry off so many thousands to the ships as rapidly as was necessary? General Hoche, as it seems, from motives of humanity, had retained his troops in the captured Fort under various pretences. But in the forenoon he could no longer delay, and he sent forward a column into the interior of the peninsula. Their bullets soon reached the spot where the hurried embarcation was taking place, and a horrible confusion immediately arose. Women and children pushed their way between the ranks of the soldiers to the boats, wounded officers were dragged along by faithful servants, and the crowding of the terrified mass was so great, that the English sailors were often obliged to use their cutlasses to prevent the boats from being overloaded. All order was abandoned; Puisaye thinking that he could serve the cause more effectually in England than on the scaffold, had already escaped to the Admiral's ship; the active firing of an English corvette, which swept the tongue of land

[1] Puisaye reports that the Admiral's signal to send off boats to the coast was not at first understood by the ships.

with its broadside, bore the chief part in keeping off the Republicans, for Sombreuil could only keep a small force together, with which he opposed a brave but desperate resistance to the enemy's line of skirmishers. This gallant youth was resolved to be the last to quit the shore, and if possible to save his wretched comrades by his own death. He was the son of the last Governor of the Hôtel des Invalides, a venerable old man, whom a devoted daughter had rescued from the blood-dripping hands of the Septemb.er murderers, but only to see him die a year afterwards under the axe of Robespierre.[1] The son, who was distinguished for his beauty, gallantry and sense of honour, had escaped, and was just about to be happily married when Puisaye's agents summoned him to take part in the expedition to Quiberon. He did not hesitate for a moment to answer the call, nor had he now the slightest doubt as to his course. The enemy's troops came nearer and nearer, their officers called out from the midst of the firing: "Lay down your arms, and no harm shall happen to you." Generals Humbert and Menage came forward and repeated this assurance[2]; at the same time the Republicans brought up artillery, and poured a destructive fire of grape shot on the Royalists as they were embarking. All the London prisoners who were among the *Émigrés* now left their ranks—and all was over. Sombreuil ordered his men to lay down their arms. Hoche received him with the greatest respect; when he asked whether a capitulation was granted, and if not, whether he

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[1] Ternaux, *Terreur* III, 288. —

[2] These were personal expressions used in the midst of the turmoil. There was nothing like a regular capitulation. Granier de Cassagnac, *Histoire du directoire*, III, 88, maintains the contrary, according to his statements in Villeneuve. Barnaud, *Memoires sur l'expédition de Quiberon.* This book, I have not had an opportunity of consulting; the statements which Granier communicates from it, I find it impossible to reconcile with the well authenticated facts.

might be allowed to atone for his companions, the General replied that he could not allow the latter to embark.

About 1,800 fugitives had been rescued by the English boats. 6,200 were taken prisoners, and among them 1,000 *Émigrés*, 3,600 Chouans, and 1,600 who had formerly served in the Republican army. The latter were released, as well as the women and children; but there still remained more than a thousand men, who, according to the strict letter of the republican laws, had incurred the penalty of immediate death. Hoche took advantage of new battles with the Chouans in the interior to quit, on the 23d, the scene of his glorious but melancholy victory and to leave the fate of the prisoners exclusively to the two Representatives. Tallien and Blad, in accordance with the prevailing sentiments of their party and the Convention, were inclined to clemency, but they did not dare to grant any pardon to the *Émigrés* without higher sanction, and hastened to Paris to make their report to the Convention. But the same baneful star which had shone on every part of this unfortunate expedition pursued the unhappy survivors of it even after the catastrophe. When Tallien arrived at his home, on the 26th of July, his wife received him with the intelligence that the Committee of Public Safety. had obtained proofs of his secret intercourse with the Royalists; that Siéyès had brought them with him from Holland; that Lanjuinais had given her a warning the day before, and she begged him to be on his guard on every side. The first and only thought of this unprincipled man on hearing these tidings was, that under such circumstances he should ruin himself if he proposed to show mercy to the captured Royalists. On the 27th, therefore, the anniversary of the 9th of Thermidor, the day of his great revolutionary deed, he mounted the rostra to heap a mass of bombastic and turgid abuse upon the conquered. He rejected with scorn the calumny that the possibility of a capitulation with such mean and cowardly trai-

tors had ever been contemplated. He produced a dagger which had been found on one of the prisoners, the point of which, he said, was poisoned. He concluded by declaring that everything was prepared to exterminate the criminals from the face of the earth. And thus the Convention signalised the close of their career, as they had done its commencement, by a wholesale massacre. The Court martial at Auray—on which a great number of the officers refused to serve—after sitting for several weeks, condemned first Sombreuil, and then 600 of his comrades, to death. The meadow in which they were shot is still called the "field of victims." Charette thereupon ordered an equal number of Republican prisoners to be massacred; it seemed as if the horrors of the Reign of Terror were to be renewed in this civil war.

The consternation and sorrow were as great in London as in Verona. The English opposition and the *Émigrés* accused Pitt's ministry of not sufficiently supporting the expedition; we now know how little ground there was for these complaints, and that the fault of the failure lay with no one but the Royalist party itself. While time was thus wasted in mutual recrimination, while the Royalist party in Paris was depressed and defeated, and the Revolutionists were making steady progress, the peasants of the Western provinces took upon themselves the task of avenging the cruelty with which the Convention had sullied the victory of Quiberon. The Chouans who escaped from the defeat summoned all their countrymen to vengeance through all the districts of Bretagne, and in a short time the Republican columns were more violently attacked than ever. The fury of the peasants was chiefly directed to the four battalions which had furnished members and executioners to the Court martial of Auray; and the month of August had not passed before the whole of these battalions had been destroyed to a man. Cadoudal, Guillot and Jambe d'Argent were the leaders who kept the best general of the Republic and 50,000 men

on the alert, extended the insurrection to the North into Normandy, and in the South compelled the Republicans to draw reinforcements of nearly 8,000 men, from La Vendée.

These circumstances rendered it simply impossible for General Canclaux to undertake anything against Charette. He had only 25,000 men, and was obliged to furnish the towns with strong garrisons, and keep a reconnoitring corps in readiness against Stofflet. He repeatedly informed the Committee of Public Safety that he was quite unable to take the offensive against Charette, who had 15,000 men under arms. The latter received in August a large consignment of arms, uniforms, and ammunition, from England and soon afterwards the intelligence that the Count d'Artois had resolved to make his appearance in La Vendée, accompanied by a powerful English fleet and some hundreds of veteran French officers. This expedition actually sailed from Portsmouth on the 25th of August, and its approach excited the greatest enthusiasm among both Vendeans and Chouans. The peasants swore that as soon as the Royal prince set foot on French ground, all the country would rise up to the very walls of Paris. But while on their side all was energy and devotion, the elements which the Emigrant nobles brought to the common cause, and the guiding influence by which the English government supported the undertaking, were to the last degree miserable and feeble. The fleet remained for twelve days in the fatal bay of Quiberon, while endless deliberations were going as to the choice of a landing place in La Vendée. Then more time was lost in useless negotiations with the French garrison of the Island of Noirmoutiers, and it was not until the end of September that the expedition at last set foot on French ground in the rocky island d'Yeu. But General Hoche had now for four weeks taken on himself the command of the Army of the West in La Vendée also; 6,000 men from the Northern army, and 20,000 from the Western Pyrenees, were in full march to support him; he wrote to the Committee of Public Safety, that he could

answer for the safety of the Republic at this point, as he had done at Quiberon. But he was not destined to gather any bloodstained laurels in this region; it was not a heart-rending, but a shameful, defeat, which the Royalists were about to undergo. The neighbourhood of the Prince had acted on the peasants like an electric shock; Charette's battalions were fuller than at any former period. And when, on the 5th of October, the Marquis Rivière appeared in his camp with a message from the Prince to lead his troops to meet him on some point of the coast, the whole army, driving the advanced posts of the Republicans out of their path by an irresistible onset, rushed with tumultuous joy to the shore. Even from Stofflet's quarters intelligence arrived that the General, roused by the appearance of a Bourbon, had forgotten his jealousy of Charette, and placed himself and his men at the disposal of the Prince. On the 10th of October, Charette's army was in full march a short league distant from the coast, when a second adjutant of the Prince announced himself to the General with the intelligence that the Count had postponed the landing to a more favourable opportunity. At the same time, to gild the bitter pill, he handed Charette a sword of honour with the inscription "I never yield." Charette seized the weapon with a convulsive grasp, pale with rage, and after a short silence burst out with the words "Tell the Prince, that he sends me my sentence of death; to-day I am surrounded by 15,000 men, to-morrow I shall not have more than 300; I have only the choice to flee or die—I will die." He knew his country and his men, who after such a disappointment could no longer be kept together; he saw destruction before his eyes, and he kept his word with bitter anger in his heart. "The cowardice of your brother," he wrote to Louis XVIII., "has ruined everything." d'Artois remained for some weeks longer on the Island in a state of weak irresolution; he thought the chances in a contest with Hoche were, after all, too uncertain; that he would be carrying on the war, not

like a Prince, but like an adventurer; and his adjutants agreed with him that it was impossible and unbecoming for one of the blood royal to engage in vulgar *Chouannerie*. When November came, and the weather grew disagreeable, the Count sailed back to England; his royal brother consoled himself for this disgraceful failure by the reflection that a victory would have thrown him and his royal renown into the shade; and that the people might have once more sung: "Saul has slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands!"

Such was the character of the men whom fate had placed in opposition to the progress of the Revolution. Just as we can well understand the foreign victories of Robespierre—in spite of all the dissolution, extravagance, and discord of his times—when we think of the internal feuds, and stupid sluggishness, of the Coalition; so there is nothing which explains to us so clearly how it was that French society—notwithstanding its hatred of Convention and Jacobinism—necessarily became thoroughly democratic, as a glance at the rulers of the *ancien régime*. With the exception of a few brave men, the ruling classes of the old State had become utterly effete. Among the Royalists themselves all active energy, all hope of success, were found, not among the princely and noble leaders, but among the peasants of the West, the priests of the South, and the citizens of Paris. The Chouans were ever ready to die for the King, because they looked on him as the buckler and ornament of their nation. But to the Count d'Artois it would have seemed an absurdity to die for his country, which had never been to him anything else than the pedestal of his princely existence.

CHAPTER IV.

CLOSE OF THE CONVENTION.

The new constitution is brought forward.—Its character and defects —The measure of the abbé siéyès.—Its rejection.—The royalist agitation inclines the convention towards the left.—The convention apprehends the return of a majority of royalists at the approaching election.—Proposition that two-thirds of the convention should enter the future legislative assembly.—Decree to this effect.—Opposition of the citizens of paris.—Pichegru's negotiation with the prince of condé. The country accepts the constitution and the decrees.—Increasing ferment in paris. The convention arms the terrorists.—Revolt of the 13th vendemiaire. It is crushed by napoleon bonaparte.—Increasing power of the mountain in the convention.—The thermidorians rejoin the montagnards.—Attempt to erect a jacobin dictatorship frustrated by thibaudeau.—Last sitting of the convention.—The independents form the new government.—They contemplate a grand policy of war and conquest.—The imperial courts compel prussia to accept the treaty of st. petersburg respecting poland.—Triple alliance between england, austria and russia.—Warlike operations on the rhine and in the alps.—Prospects for 1796.

At the end of June the Convention commenced its final task—the making of a new Constitution. On the 23rd of June, Boissy d'Anglas appeared as spokesman of the Eleven to bring forward their proposals, and to support them by an elaborate and circumstantial report. There was no little suspense both within and without the walls of the Convention. The experience of the last few years, indeed, had everywhere damped the intoxicating hopes which had formerly greeted the labours of the Constituent assembly of 1791; men had learned that a series of excellent paragraphs are

not in themselves sufficient to conjure up a golden age of perfect happiness. But the present position of affairs was becoming every week more untenable for the one party, and more intolerable to the others. The population longed for some halting place of rest. The parties in the Convention agreed at least in one wish, to make their government agreeable to the great mass of the people, by means of the new Constitution.

Boissy began by taking a circumstantial review of the stages through which the Revolution had already passed. When he came to speak of the Constitution of 1791, he attempted to show how impossible it was that monarchy and freedom should co-exist in France. But he dwelt with still greater emphasis and minuteness of detail on the faults of the Constitution of 1793, and the atrocities of the Reign of Terror, and showed that they had their source in the institutions of 1790. It was indeed clear enough that the terrible experiences which had been made, had not been without their fruit. He deplored the unbridled license of the populace, which had possessed the means at any moment of enslaving the national representatives by an *émeute*. He described the evils arising from the fact, that the Legislature consisted of only one body, so that every outbreak, every tyrannical act of the majority, immediately affected the government and conquered the nation. He dwelt on the necessity of giving the legislative and executive powers perfect independence, each in its own strictly defined sphere, that there might be no collision between them, that one might never have to succumb to the other. Every one of these propositions would have been a heresy three years ago; now any one who opposed them would be looked on as a mischievous anarchist.

The debate on the fundamental law, which he thus introduced, was completed in less than three weeks, in spite of daily interruption by the current business. Very little opposition was made to the principles enunciated in his

propositions. The Moderate party had, for the present, no hope of obtaining any further concessions in a conservative or monarchical direction; the Independents intended themselves to govern the country at some future time, and had, therefore, no interest in weakening the government in favour of individual freedom, the clubs, or popular assemblies. They too, with a view to impending elections, did homage to public feeling, the direction of which was not for a moment to be doubted. "For heaven's sake," cried one of their leaders, Larevellière-Lépeaux, "spare us your abstract principles, and pompous flowers of speech, which have made us wretched for so many years; let us create a constitution according to the wishes of those who possess something." With this view the Commission proposed that—as actual equality was a dangerous chimera, and only civil equality was really attainable; and as the government of non-proprietors was a state of nature, and only that of proprietors a political state—proprietors alone should be members of the legislative body. It is true that even they declared the right of voting to be a natural right, and not a public office; but the bill excluded those who were utterly destitute of property, by requiring fixed residence for a year and the payment of some kind of tax. As a corresponding limitation of candidates for office, a proposition formerly made by Mirabeau was adopted; *viz.* that no one should be appointed to any office, without having passed through one of subordinate rank. The Eleven recommended that all elections should be direct; alleging that double elections had been proved by experience not to be conducive to order. In the general administration of the country they allowed the Departments to remain, but abolished the very superfluous Districts, and placed the Communes directly under the Departmental authorities, forming only the smaller rural localities into Cantons. The administrative bodies were simplified, the number of officials reduced, and the influence of the central Government

considerably increased. The legislative body was to consist of two Councils, the members of which were to be chosen by the people—the "Council of ancients," consisting of 250 members, and the "Council of Five hundred." Every member of the former was to be at least 40, and of the latter, 30 years of age. No other distinction was proposed, the least trace of which would have been regarded as a return to the proscribed aristocratic institutions. Each Parliament was to last four years, and every two years, half the members were to retire and be replaced by new elections. It was a matter of course, according to the views which prevailed at that time, that there was no recess between the sessions, and that the Government had no right of dissolving the Legislative body. The right of initiating measures was to be confined to the Five-hundred; the Council of Ancients in case of the rejection of a law, would relieve the Government from the odium of the *veto*. As a protection against *émeutes* of the populace of Paris, the Council of Ancients was to have the right of assembling in some other town, and a small guard for the Legislative body was to be formed. That the Government might not interfere with the right of deliberation, it was ordained that no body of troops might come within several miles of the place of assembly; to which it might easily have been objected that a Government which had the power and the will to use violence towards the Councillors themselves, would hardly show greater respect to an arbitrary line than to the Council.

The opinions of the Commission had long wavered in respect to the shape which the Executive power was to assume. The Royalist members wished for a President. Daunou, a man of high reputation and great influence, proposed two Consuls, each of whom should govern for a year. Others wished for three, and others, again, for five regents; and the majority finally decided for this last number. So the Commission proposed a "Directory" of five members, one of whom was to retire every year, and be replaced by

a new election. The Directory, however, was not to be chosen by the people, because it was thought that a body so elected by the whole nation would have too much weight as compared with the Deputies, each of whom was chosen only by one Department. It was ordained, therefore, that the Five-hundred should draw up a list of Candidates from which the Council of Ancients should select the Directors. It was hoped that a good understanding would thus be firmly established between the Government and the majority of the Legislative body. The Directory, taking counsel with the Ministers, was to preside over affairs of Diplomacy, War, the administration of Justice, Civil administration and Finance. The Exchequer, on the other hand, was to be independent of the Directory; no Director was to lead an army, and, above all, the Executive government was not to take the slightest part in legislation, or the granting of supplies. The Representative body could not indeed expel a Director from the Government, but they could, in case of his committing provable offences, impeach him before a Court formed for that purpose.

Lastly, the bill fixed the relations in which the Government thus constituted was to stand to the rights of the citizens. "There exist," it said, "no differences of rank among citizens, except those which belong to office, and even these exist only in the sphere of action proper to each official. The State acknowledges no religious corporations. Every man is entitled to practise his own form of worship; no one can be compelled to pay for the support of any *cultus*, and the State endows none. The Press is free. The labour of the artisan, the manufacturer, and the merchant, is emancipated from all trammels. Property is secured, and can only be expropriated in case of necessity, and in return for compensation. The house of the citizen is inviolable; no one may force his way into it by night. No assembly of citizens may call itself a club; societies which engage in politics may not hold public sittings,

or stand in connection with one another. Petitions may be presented by individuals, or legal authorities, but not by unions or societies. All armed assemblies are forbidden. The French nation irrevocably prohibits the return of the *Émigrés*, and guarantees the possession of the confiscated domains to the purchasers.

If we consider these propositions in their connexion with one another, we shall have the history, and the actual position, of the French rulers clearly before our eyes. The Convention found itself threatened on the one side by the Jacobins, and on the other by the Royalists; the fundamental law, therefore, prohibits the formation of Clubs on the one hand, and the restoration of the *Émigrés* on the other. The Convention calls to mind both the 31st of May, and the struggle in La Vendée; the Constitution, therefore, prohibits all mass-petitions, and seditious meetings, and disowns all connexion between Church and State. This Constitution, therefore, is a reflection of that tacking between two irreconcileable parties, by which the Convention, since the 9th of Thermidor, had maintained its friendless rule. It contains a complete catalogue of the evils to be avoided, and the opponents to be put down. But, unfortunately, when we look for the adherents of the new system, the props and protectors of the new Constitution, we look in vain. The proscription of the *Émigrés*, and the renunciation of all connexion with the church, threw millions into necessary and permanent hostility to the Republic. None but the remnant of the Jacobins could agree with it in principle, and these were alienated from the Constitution by the regulation respecting petitions and unions. In how different a manner did the First Consul, five years later, rally the nation round his throne! "I belong to no party but to France; whoever loves France and obeys my government is on my side."

It would have required a supereminently excellent disposition of forces to maintain a Constitution which was built on such heaving and broken ground as that of 1795. And how much

was wanting in it—not merely of high excellence—but of the primary and most indispensable elements of a stable and enlightened polity! In a parliamentary State everything depends on the wholesome action and reaction of the Government and the Legislature upon each other; everything depends on the solution of the fundamental problem, that each should be independent in its own sphere, and yet that they should mutually and incessantly influence and control one another. From the very nature of things this problem is perpetually changing its form; it requires, in different ages and nations, different legal regulations; and above all it needs, side by side with formal enactments, practical tact and good will on the part of those concerned. In France men had experienced the too great preponderance of Parliament, which had finally absorbed all government. They now thought to remedy the evil by an entire separation of the two Departments. The Directory was allowed to issue letters and summonses to the Council, but the Constitution gave them no legal influence on their resolutions. The Council could impeach a Director who was foolish enough to allow himself to be caught in a criminal offence; but they had no right to interfere in matters of Administration, Police, or Diplomacy. The Directory had all the actual power over the troops, and the officials, and, therefore, over the citizens and the country: but the theory of the Constitution regarded them as the mere executive organs of the legislative will of the two Councils. If we compare this system with that of any other constitutional State, we immediately recognise its main defect. The Government, having no right of initiating measures, or of adjourning, or dissolving, the Legislative assembly, was still too weak to oppose the Council. The Council could at any time checkmate them, even without a judicial impeachment, by legislation, and stopping the supplies. From their entire similarity, it was not to be expected that the Council of Ancients would take a materially different direction from

that of the Five-hundred, and thereby prevent or mitigate the collision between the Executive and Legislative bodies. Directly, therefore, a breach between Government and Parliament took place, the inevitable result would be, either a return to parliamentary omnipotence, or new usurpations on the part of the Government—*i. e.*, in either case, a breach of the constitution.

The Convention, however, had no misgivings on this head. The debates were conducted with much deliberation and care, and, for the most part, with dignity and good order, but they were generally wanting in depth. First of all it was demanded that the new Constitution should be accompanied by a declaration of the "rights of man." A few of the more sensible members warned the Assembly not to wander again into general maxims of morality; but the tide was not to be stemmed, and it was considered a great step to attach to the declaration of man's rights, a declaration of his duties also. In details, it is true, the majority clearly showed how completely the experiences of 1793 had alienated them from the spirit of 1791. When some one spoke of the right to work, Lanjuinais declared that it was the duty of society to provide for its members, but that the individual had not on that account any definite legal claim to any definite assistance; that to acknowledge such a claim would be to perpetuate confusion and civil war. Thomas Payne attempted to maintain universal suffrage, but found only one supporter, and was put down with a high hand by Larevellière-Lépeaux. The other changes which the Convention made in the proposal of the Commission were none of them opposed to the general principles laid down. They restored the system of double election; limited the duration of parliament to three years, and ordained that a third of the Deputies should retire every year and be replaced by new elections. A single deputy once spoke of the necessity of giving the Directory an influence on the initiation of laws; but though he was supported by Lanjuinais, his motion fell to the ground amidst

the cry: "that is the *veto*—that is monarchy!" The proposals of the Commission were nearly all adopted.

The only debate of any importance, or decided influence on the future, was brought about by an interlude introduced by Abbé Siéyès. Ever since the earliest times of the Constituent assembly he had acquired the reputation of a professional expert in all constitutional questions. Of the positive merits of a practical statesman, indeed, he had never given any proofs, but he was looked on as the first political theorist and philosopher; and in an age which was saturated with the love of radical and abstract statecraft, such a reputation was sure to recommend a man, even when not backed by the air of reserved self-reliance, and unfathomable wisdom, which was peculiar to Siéyès. The members of the Commission had frequently sought his advice and instruction, but he had contented himself by hinting that he had, indeed, much to say, but was not certain whether he should be understood. The Commission was obliged to conclude its labours without his assistance. He spoke of their measure with contemptuous derision, and as Boissy was afflicted by a tendency to stutter, he called it the Ba Be Bi Bo Bu Constitution and suddenly brought forward a draft of his own eagerly looked for system. He pointed out, and not without reason, that very important considerations had been overlooked by the Commission; that the Government was robbed of its most essential attributes; and that the division of Parliament into two bodies was superfluous. He himself went back, as he expressed it, to first principles. He considered it absurd to talk of a division, or a balance, of power; the political life of a nation, he said, must not, indeed, be a single power, but it must be a unity of powers. He made a distinction between the four principal functions of the national will—the Political, the constituent power, which constructs the foundations of the State—the Petitioning, by means of which individuals make known their wants —the Governing, which concerns itself with the necessities of

the State, keeps an eye on the wants of the whole community, and seeks to satisfy them—and the Legislative, which enacts regulations necessary to compass these objects. For each of these functions he recommended an assembly of representatives—a Tribunate, to represent the interests of the citizens; a Government, to protect those of the State; a Legislature to decide upon the proposals of the two first; and lastly a "Constitutional Jury," to watch over the purity of the Constitution and the Courts of law.

His long address was listened to with a mixture of reverence, astonishment, and derision, and at last with undisguised dissent. The Convention soon came to the conclusion that his Tribunate—which could only bring forward motions but never a measure—would only be an impotent talking machine; that his Legislature, which could originate nothing, but must always wait upon the wishes of others, would be destitute of all real power. It was only owing to their respect for his high reputation, that the Commission entered more fully into the consideration of the "Constitutional Jury." But they too came to the conclusion that such a body, if it ever attained to any importance at all, would throw all others into the shade, and as supreme judge of every act of the Legislature and the Executive would absorb all power to itself. The Convention unanimously rejected the plan. Siéyès thereupon remarked that be could expect nothing else from the narrow-mindedness of his contemporaries, and that he looked to the time when a more enlightened generation would rise to his own level. He was destined to see his hopes fulfilled, for his scheme was made in 1799 the basis of the Consular constitution. It is, indeed, true that he then made the bitter experience, that his democratic philosophy only served to pave the way for an unlimited military monarchy.

On the 17th of August, the Convention completed the Constitution in the second reading, and the Committee of Eleven announced new proposals, with regard to the time and

manner of bringing the new system into practical operation. During the discussion on the forms of the Constitution, careful provision had been made for the future; but now when it was to be clothed with flesh and blood, the moods and passions of the day began to exert a predominant influence.

Simultaneously with the last deliberations on the Constitution, the Convention had passed through the troubles arising from the descent upon Quiberon and the *Émigrés*. We have already remarked on the effect produced thereby in Paris. For the moment the mass of the population turned away from the Royalists, and all the central parties of the Convention were involuntarily drawn towards the Left. For they all found themselves suddenly attacked by an adversary on the extreme Right, whose victory would have brought down equal destruction upon all. The Government which since the 1st of Prairial had favoured the friends of the monarchy through fear of the Terrorists, now began to seek the aid of the remnant of the Jacobin party in their contest with the Royalists. A short time previously the Police arrested every man in the theatres who disturbed the singing of the "*Reveil du Peuple*"; now they interfered if the audience tried to prevent the Jacobins from striking up the Marseillaise; and at last a decree of the Convention prohibited the singing of any songs which did not belong to the text of the play. It had a still worse effect in Paris that the *Comité de Sûreté générale* allowed no further arrests of Jacobin citizens. The Sections sent up angry addresses, and however zealously the orators of the Convention repeated the assurance that no one contemplated a renewal of the Reign of Terror, yet suspicion, once awakened, prevailed in the Sections of the Capital, and obliterated entirely the fear of the *Émigrés*. On the 24th of July a lively debate took place respecting the arrested Terrorists; all were agreed that they could not be detained any longer in the durance of the Police without judicial

examination; but when the Committee for Legislation proposed to bring them before the ordinary courts, the Left vehemently protested, because, they said, all the courts were filled with members of reactionary sentiments, and therefore with deadly enemies of the arrested Jacobins. A resolution was carried to appoint a Conventional commission of 12 members to superintend their trial. But the citizens of Paris saw in this measure a confirmation of their fears, that the Convention intended to save these men of blood from the punishment they merited, and then to employ them in oppressing the country, and they now redoubled their exertions. On the 29th a Section appeared at the bar with the demand, that the Convention would expel the criminals who were still to be found within its walls; and on the 31st another appeared with a petition that the Convention would revoke their late decree, and bring the accused before a military tribunal for speedy judgment. It was usually the Mountain alone which murmured at such demonstrations; but now an excitable and resolute member of the Gironde, Louvet, rose to say that it was necessary to keep an eye, not only on the myrmidons of Robespierre, but on the Chouans and their friends, who were no less ferocious enemies of freedom. The Thermidorians loudly applauded his words; "we wish, cried Legendre, "for no renewal of terror, but as we have tamed the Terrorists, we will also control the *Émigrés* and monarchs." At the close of the sitting Dubois-Crancé went up to the petitioners and loaded them with the coarsest abuse, so that an officer of the National guard loudly cried out, that that was a sorry proof of respect for the right of petition, and a tumult was raised in the Convention itself which lasted for a considerable time. The proceedings made such a painful impression, and the excitement among the citizens was so great, that Dubois, three days afterwards, was compelled to excuse himself by saying that he had been born in the Forest of Ardennes, and had imbibed a certain roughness of manners with his mother's milk. But he afterwards

brought new charges against the Reactionists and the "malevolent" press, and demanded that "the Commission of Twelve" should liberate the imprisoned patriots before the beginning of the Election, in order that the Royalists might not have their own way in the meetings of primary electors. But this very proposal produced a change in the sentiments of the majority. The nearer the time of the elections approached, the more desirable was it for the Deputies to be at any rate in tolerable harmony with public opinion. Henry Larivière, therefore, was loudly applauded when he protested with powerful eloquence, against showing any kind of favour to the Terrorists, and demanded avenging justice against all the criminals of the Reign of Terror. A few days afterwards he succeeded in obtaining a revocation of the decree which had ordained the appointment of the Committee of Twelve, and on the 9th of August, in accordance with a report of the Government committees, the arrest of nine members of the Mountain was decreed, who under Robespierre had filled the provinces with blood and misery. No one, however, intended to subject these men to a criminal prosecution; the sole object of the Convention was to do something to reconcile the Sections. To console the Left for this concession to their opponents, the Convention, a week later, issued an order that all *Émigrés* who were come to Paris to get their names struck out of the list by the Legislative committee, should be peremptorily ordered to leave the city.

On the same day, the 18th of August, Baudin of the Ardennes, in the name of the Committee of Eleven, brought up the report concerning the introduction of the Constitution—or, as he called it, the means of terminating the Revolution. He was listened to with great and well founded interest. For, in good truth, whoever considered the position of France was obliged to confess that, to find a means of passing, by legal means, from the present despotism to a well regulated order of things, was a more difficult and

perilous matter than to draw up the Constitution itself. There was a question still more important to the Convention and the country than that of the intrinsic value of the Constitution, and that was, to what hands the power should hereafter be entrusted. In a perfectly new polity which had no roots in the past, which rested on no tradition, or ancient institutions, the old maxim was peculiarly applicable, that a law is worth just as much, as the people who administer it. Who was to stand at the helm of the new Constitution?—that was the anxious question which occupied all minds in the Convention, and formed the contents of the new report of the Committee.

Baudin first explained that the Constitution must receive its final ratification from the great mass of the French people, by a decree of the whole nation passed in their assemblies of primary electors. It is true that no one thought an unfavourable decision on the part of the people possible. The country had no alternative between acceptance of the Constitution, or the continuance of the Convention; and Baudin and his colleagues knew too well that France would prefer anything to the prolongation of the present state of things. But here lay the danger, which in their eyes was more terrible than any other. As the country did not wish to keep the Convention, there was little probability that the electors would choose the present members of the Convention. And if they should send a reactionary majority to the Councils—if these should choose a Directory of their own political colour—what guarantee was there for the personal safety of the revolutionary rulers?—not to mention the loss of their present power, and its enjoyments—what security was there against a resolution being come to by all the powers of the State for the splendid restoration of the monarchy, amidst the triumphant plaudits of the nation?

Baudin reminded the Convention how the Constituent assembly had prohibited the re-election of its members, and

thereby dealt a death blow to the solidity of its own work. He said that the new Constitution itself pointed out a way of avoiding the recurrence of such a danger. It ordained that for the future a third of the Legislative body was to retire and be replaced by new elections; if, therefore, the same principle were applied at the present moment, and two-thirds of the Convention were allowed to pass over into the new Legislative body, a strong majority would be secured to the present rulers. Nothing could shew more clearly than this proposal how far the majority had been driven towards the Left by the attacks of the Royalists. Even in the Moderate party not a voice was to be found demanding full freedom of choice for the nation. All the factions, without exception, agreed in the principle that two-thirds of the present members must enter the new Legislative chamber. The contest between them only concerned the mode of determining the two-thirds. The Left, which saw little chance of seeing their men chosen by the Assembly itself, demanded the decision by lot. They were supported not only by the remnant of the Mountain, but by the Independents, and a few Thermidorians, and among them Tallien, who since the discovery of his royalist leanings had sought, with ever increasing eagerness, the friendship of the hitherto so much hated Siéyès. The Moderate party would have preferred to leave to the People,—on whom they were about to force the Convention as its future rulers—at any rate the choice among the members; in which case they felt sure that they should themselves be chosen by a large majority into the two Councils. But the dubious attitude of the Thermidorians rendered it very questionable whether they alone could carry the decree, and in order to keep their hold on at least a part of their late allies, they resolved to adopt a middle course, and to propose nomination by the Convention itself. In union with the Thermidorians they might thus be certain of success, and the Eleven

accordingly proposed that a special Commission—"a confidential Jury" of the Convention—should make the selection of the two-thirds.

Baudin's speech excited a lively debate. At first the Left, in consequence of an incautious expression of Lanjuinais, succeeded in getting the upper hand; and after Chénier had energetically reminded the Assembly of the hostility of the Parisian sections, a motion for leaving the choice to the people was at first rejected almost unanimously. The proposal of the Eleven to nominate them through a Conventional committee was also negatived, and the Eleven were commissioned to report on the system of choosing by lot. But the feeling then changed. When the indispensable presumption for adopting the lot—the acknowledgement of equal worth in all the members—was maintained in a few dry words by the Montagnard Charlier: "we are all chosen by the people, we are all equally deserving of the public confidence"—Bailleul replied with equal emphasis: "yes, we have all been chosen by the people, but since our election we have not all observed the same conduct; you may say as loudly as you please that we all enjoy the same confidence, but from every corner of the land you will be answered by a loud and unanimous "no"!" The Commission now recommended the nomination of the two-thirds by a decree of the whole house; the Right more and more loudly demanded that the choice should be left to the people; and one of their speakers produced no small effect when he said: "I received my commission from the people, and into their hands alone will I give it back." Tallien and Louvet made a violent resistance; "who," cried they, "will protect the Republicans in the assemblies of primary electors?" It was impossible to confess more openly that the Convention, which professed to have no higher principle than freedom and the sovereignty of the people, could only protect itself from that sovereign people by coercion and violence. Even in the party of Independents there were some who felt the

disgrace of such an attitude; the nomination by lot was negatived by a large majority, and on the fourth day of the debate the Convention at last decreed the selection of two-thirds of the Convention by the people. The decree, which was completed on the 22nd of August (5 Fructidor) likewise contained the provision, that the new Constitution should be laid before the armies also for acceptance—a formality, the sole undisguised purpose of which was to intimitate the hostile *Bourgeoisie*. Eight days afterwards, on the 13th of Fructidor, the Eleven brought up a second decree, which fixed the minor regulations for holding the election. Each Department was first to nominate two-thirds of its representatives from the members of the Convention, and then another third at pleasure. Besides these a certain number were to be elected from the present deputies as substitutes, from which the Convention was to fill up any vacancies that might occur through double elections. This was a final concession which the Right had made to their revolutionary allies, without, as it seems, foreseeing its future importance. The Convention was highly pleased at obtaining in this way almost entire unanimity on so important a question. They at the same time took several steps, partly to appease, and partly to control, parties outside the house. They deprived a much debated revolutionary law—which prohibited wills, and decreed equality of shares in inheritance—of the retrospective force which extended its operation to all wills and divisions of inheritance made subsequently to 1789. They abolished testimonials of patriotic sentiments, by the refusal of which the Authorities could send any citizen to prison as a suspected person: they prohibited, by a single stroke of the pen, what were once considered the palladium of revolutionary freedom—the political societies and clubs. They hoped in this way to get through the elections without any particular convulsions, but provided for emergencies by collecting some thousands of troops of the line in a camp near Paris. The Convention thus

had recourse to the same measures by which the Broglie ministry had conjured up the storming of the Bastille; they tried to stop the mouth of popular discussion, and summoned paid legions against the free citizens.

It soon became evident that they had good reasons for doing so. The citizens of Paris were furious at the two decrees. For a year past they had been hoping for the termination of the Convention; the new Constitution brought their warmest wishes to near fruition; when all at once they learned that they were to endure for at least one year longer the rule of a Conventional majority, and the hearts of thousands boiled over with furious indignation. Had they considered the matter more calmly, they would have seen that their excitement had but little real foundation. As their sentiments—hatred against the Convention as a body, appreciation of the moderate leaders Thibaudeau, Boissy d'Anglas, Lanjuinais, &c., and an utter indifference to mere forms of Government, provided only that honourable men attained to power—as these sentiments were shared by an infinite majority of the whole nation, it might be reckoned upon with certainty that the newly elected third would be exclusively composed of deputies of their own colour. If, therefore, they employed all their zeal and energy in bringing about an understanding between the Departments for the election of two-thirds of the Convention, there was every probability of obtaining a moderate and conservative majority in both Councils, and—which was the main thing, under existing circumstances—of forming an upright and peace-loving Government. All considerations pointed out this course as the only right one—*viz.* simply to accept and make the best use of the Electoral decrees, and to postpone all further steps until the new Constitution was established. But parties, and the great masses of mankind, are not accustomed to calculate so coolly. During the last few weeks the suspicions against the Jacobin leanings of the Convention had been reawakened. This distrust had been increased by

the approach of the troops; the citizens of Paris declared it to be a point of honour not to submit to these two decrees, but to maintain the full freedom of choice for the nation.

As early as the 28th of August, a delegation of one of the Sections appeared at the bar to complain of the approach of the troops. "The armies," replied the President Chénier, "are also a part of the people, and only the enemies of freedom could mistrust its truest champions." Another Section demanded a free election of Deputies; their spokesman gave the bold advice that the present deputies should deserve the confidence of the nation, and not demand it. "It is the last resource of royal despotism," rejoined Chénier, "to calumniate the founders of the Republic and its fourteen armies." Tallien then carried a motion that the answer of the President should be printed and sent to the troops. While the Convention was thus pointing more and more openly to the troops as their real stay and support, the indignation of the citizens rose higher and higher. The Lepelletier Section, four days afterwards, repeated the demands of the two preceeding ones. This Section was the former quarter "des Filles St. Thomas"—the broad Vivienne and Richelieu streets, the wealthy inhabitants of which had always been hostile to the Democrats, and now took the lead of the opposition. The meetings of primary voters to vote on the Constitution and the electoral decrees [1] were fixed for the 6th of September. In the Lepelletier Section the proceedings were inaugurated by a solemn declaration that every citizen was entitled to

[1] It is without reason that Wachsmuth considers that these were not to be voted upon. In the debates of the 3rd and 4th of Fructidor the speakers repeatedly declare that as supplementary portions of the Constitution they must, of course, be laid before the people for their acceptance. The *acte de garantie* of the Section Lepelletier was not intended to vindicate the undeniable right to vote on this subject, but to secure those who rejected the decrees from all prosecution.

express his opinion freely on the Constitution, the decrees, and every measure for the public weal, because every other authority must give way before the primary assemblies of the sovereign people, and that, to this end, all citizens were placed under the common protection of their own and all other Sections. The Convention considered this resolution so dangerous, that some members demanded that it should sit *en permanence;* however, they contented themselves for the present with issuing a sharp decree, which forbade under heavy penalties the establishment of a Civic central committee, such as the Sections desired. They decreed at the same time the removal of all officials who were non-juring priests, officers of the National guard, or relatives of an *Émigré;* and above all they strengthened themselves by addresses of devotion from the regiments, which, on a hint of the Committees, were easily obtained. The soldiers, it is true, felt little affection for the Convention, who allowed them to starve and perish, but they were attached to the colours of the Republic, under which they had gained such splendid victories and fought against the allies of the *Émigrés;* and it was the intrigues of the latter alone, they said, which excited the disturbances in Paris.

We need not point out how ungrounded this last assertion was. If there had not been a Bourbon or an *Émigré* in the world, the Parisian sections would not have been a whit the less hostile to the Convention and its electoral laws. It lay, indeed, in the nature of the circumstances, that the Royalists greeted the new movement with acclamations, and strained every nerve to extend and accelerate it; but alas, we must also add, that by their inconsiderate haste they drove the citizens into the most dangerous paths, and at last brought on a most fatal catastrophe. They would hear of no postponement; they saw the possibility of crushing the Convention by an overwhelming insurrection, and of dealing a blow for the cause of monarchy by means of the city of Paris, as the Jacobins had formerly done, on the

31st of May, for the Democracy. The royalist Agency set all its confidential friends in convulsive motion; several members of the Right in the former National assembly made common cause with them; a number of young literary men and journalists filled the press with a sharp fire of exciting articles; Fréron's *Jeunesse dorée* were furious with their former master, who, with shameful want of faith, had forbidden them to sing "the *Reveil du Peuple*," and to fight with the Jacobins! Although the great mass of peaceable citizens, in spite of their wrath against the revolutionary Convention, were very little inclined to make a new Revolution against it, no one could get a hearing in the Sections who did not acknowledge insurrection as the sacred duty of patriots in all cases of oppression; more considerate friends were cried down, and opponents were expelled from the meetings with threats. Intelligence of similar agitation arrived from the Provinces. In Chartres thé women had demanded cheaper bread, forced the Commissioner there to sign a lower tarif, and then led him round the town, sitting on an ass, amidst continual cries of *Vive le Roi;* so that the wretched man in his despair had shot himself through the head. In Nonancourt a fight had taken place between the citizens and the troops; and from Versailles, Dreux and Strasburg, reports were sent of the general anger excited by the electoral decrees. The initiated among the Royalists whispered to one another a piece of news of far greater moment. In the month of August, the Prince of Condé, who commanded the small army of *Émigrés* on the Upper Rhine, had gained the ear of General Pichegru by means of Fauche-Borel, a bookseller of Neufchatel, and had received from him the most encouraging assurances for the restoration of the Bourbons. This intelligence was as well founded as it was incredible. What particular motive acted on the former *protegé* of St. Just, whether patriotic rage or envious vexation, whether concern for the public interest or his own, cannot be decided, since the General has preserved a

complete silence and reserve. One thing is certain, that he declared to the Prince of Condé his readiness to lead his army to the right bank of the Rhine, to form a junction there with the *Émigrés* and then to march with the combined forces to Paris. The troops of the Rhine army were strongly attached to their general, and were animated by the bitterest anger against the Convention [1]; the undertaking, therefore, though extremely hazardous, was by no means hopeless. Condé, however, could not come to an understanding with the Austrians, who would not allow the Republican general to cross over to the right bank; while Pichegru, on his part, declared that he was only sure of his people during a victorious offensive movement. The plan was consequently postponed, but the secret correspondence was continued, and the Royalist agency in Paris, having such an ally in the back ground, were all the more eager to strike a blow in the streets of the capital.

The Revolutionary politicians in the Convention saw these plots hatching with inward satisfaction. They did not doubt that with their troops of the line they should be able to crush at once any movement of the peaceful *Bourgeoisie*, and then to turn their victory to account for themselves, and to the ruin of the Moderate party. Nothing could more effectually further their object of gaining a majority in the Councils and the Directory, in spite of the new third—a majority which, if the Sections had acted with firmness and obeyed the law, would have inevitably fallen to the Moderates. The more violently the Royalists bestirred themselves in Paris, the more decidedly did the Thermidorians and the waverers turn to the side of the Independents. A striking proof of this was given during the debates on the elections, when the Left succeeded in repealing, by a large majority, the freedom

[1] Besides the testimony of Fauche-Borel, this fact is strongly confirmed by Gouvion St. Cyr, who describes the acceptance of the new Constitution by the army as a mere empty show.

of public worship which had been granted a few months before.

But the Sections did not allow themselves to be diverted from their purpose. One Section after another announced with ostentatious malice that their primary assembly had accepted the Constitution, but rejected the decrees. They did not, however, succeed at this very first step in carrying the provinces with them, the return, on the contrary, showed a considerable majority for the electoral law also. The mass of the population, owing to the prevailing apathy, had taken no part in the voting-at all. For the Constitution there were 900,000 votes and 40,000 against it; for the decrees nearly 170,000, and against them 93,000. The armies had unanimously voted addresses of approval. Whereupon, on the 23rd of September, the Convention declared the Constitution and the electoral decrees to be law, ordered that the nomination of the electoral colleges should be completed at latest by the 2nd of October, and fixed the beginning of the election of Deputies for the 12th of October, and the opening of the Legislative body for the 6th of November.

The publication of these decrees in the Parisian sections was the signal for open violence. In the Palais Royal a riot took place, and shots were fired, on the 25th of September; troops of young men marched through the streets crying "down with the two-thirds!" a depressing gloom brooded over the city, and the wildest and most contradictory reports were spread. The Convention made the city of Paris responsible for the safety of the national representatives, and directed the generals to keep flying columns in readiness to march on Paris. All parties of the Assembly were so unanimous in their resistance to the threats of the insurgents, that Thibaudeau reminded the Parisians of Isnard's threats against the Jacobin municipality in 1793; and Boissy d'Anglas and Lanjuinais, however much they sympathised with the wishes of the Parisians, did not dare to utter a word in

their defence. Preventive and threatening decrees followed one another in rapid succession, according to which any one who was caught taking part in seditious meetings was to be treated as a convicted traitor; the city authorities were strictly forbidden to call out the armed force, every officer who ordered out his men at the command of a Section was liable to be tried by court-martial. Even the notorious law against the *suspects*, the darling offspring of Terrorism, was now repealed in the struggle against the enemies of the Terrorists, because it gave the city authorities the unlimited right of arrest. And thus both sides approached nearer and nearer to the inevitable collision. However much the more prudent of the citizens and the Moderates in the Convention might deplore it, the Independents on the one side, and the Royalists on the other, irresistibly carried their more peaceable confederates with them. Tallien, although still considered a member of the Right, indulged in the most violent language against "the swarm of bandits and Chouans" who carried on their intrigues in the Sections; and Barras complained loudly of the weakness of the Government, which left the field open to the enemies of freedom. On the 3rd of October, the Convention was observing a solemn day of mourning in memory of the Girondists who had been put to death by Robespierre, when intelligence was brought that four of the Sections had summoned all the Electors of Paris, not on the appointed day, the 12th, but on the present day, and had ordered out an armed force for their protection. This was the first step of formal insubordination, and the Convention met it at once with the greatest energy. They issued orders that all assemblies of primary electors should immediately disperse, forbade all meetings of the Electors before the 12th, and, in order to be ready for action at any moment, voted the *permanence* of their own sittings. When the decree was proclaimed in the evening by torchlight, the people received it with laughter and cries of derision; the torches were extinguished, and

the Commissioners put to flight. It was not until General Menou came up with a considerable force that the rioters dispersed, and the assembly of Electors yielded to violence. Meanwhile the Government committees appointed a Commission of five members to preserve public order. Among these was Barras, who immediately suggested the formation of "a sacred battalion of patriots"—a body in which all the remnants of the Revolutionary army and the scum of the Faubourgs were united. The Jacobins of the old school who were still left in Paris were enchanted at the sight; but in the Sections all were agreed that they must now fight to the last drop of blood, since the Convention had once more summoned the murderous bands of the Reign of Terror to arms.

Of the 48 Sections of the capital, 44 were in full revolt on the morning of the 4th of October. They had formed a Central committee in the Section Lepelletier, which had the disposal of nearly 30,000 National guards. The latter, unfortunately, had possessed no artillery since the month of Prairial. This Committee renounced its allegiance to the Convention in all form; the alarm was beat in all quarters of the city; numerous troops of the National guard hastened to the Section Lepelletier, and issued a proclamation that they were about to protect their wives and children against the myrmidons of the Convention. The Government, meanwhile, brought new regiments into the city, but the officers showed little zeal for civil war, and their chief, General Menou, refused the command of the patriot battalions, saying that he would not lead banditti. After long hesitation he marched into the Lepelletier Section, deployed his column in a very unfavourable manner in the streets occupied by the insurgents, and at last turned back when the Section answered his summons to disperse by an energetic protest. He was not a traitor, as the Left declared, but only animated by the, under such circumstances, hopeless wish to prevail by friendly remonstrances. He was deprived of his command at once.

And in fact his conduct might have led to the complete and speedy defeat of the Convention. For, on the evening of the 4th, there were, in addition to the 1,500 patriots, only 4,000 troops at disposal for the defence of the Tuileries, without artillery, without communication with the magazines in different parts of the town, and without skilful or energetic leaders. Of the five Commissioners, Barras from his rank in the army—he was a soldier by profession, and during the reign of the Convention had become Brigadier-general by length of service—had taken the military business into his own hands. He went clattering about with sword and spurs and plenty of bluster, and promised to crush the Royalists, as completely as he had done the Terrorists on the 9th of Thermidor; but with all his braggadocio he could form no systematic plan of operations. An advance of the National guard *en masse* behind the retreating columns of Menou would have given the former certain victory. But they, too, were without any talent for war. They shouted for joy the whole night through, at the courage with which the Lepelletier Section accompanied General Menou back to his house by torchlight; and it was not until the following morning that they appointed, as Commander-in-chief of their forces, one General Danican, who had formerly commanded against the Vendeans, and had been dismissed by the Commissioners on account of his humanity, according to some—or on account of his incapacity, as others maintained. His political sentiments induced him to accept the nomination of the Sections, but he had from the very first little confidence in their prowess, and was himself, as it seems, uncertain what measures he ought to take. This hesitation of its adversaries gave the Convention a chance of safety.

In the early dawn of the 5th of October (13 Vendémiaire), Barras was formally appointed Commander-in-chief of the Conventional forces, and now that the moment for action was approaching, he remembered a man, who for the last three months had been the military adviser of the Committee

of Public Safety—General Bonaparte. We met with him last in the Italian army in the campaign of 1794, for which the Conventional commissioners had drawn up their plan of operations mainly in accordance with his statements. He was a zealous republican, because, in the storms of so great a Revolution, he saw before him the widest theatre for the display of the power which he felt within him; but he was by no means a Jacobin or Robespierreist as has been often said; on the contrary, he protected every officer of noble birth in his brigade who shewed himself able and trustworthy, and was very well satisfied that the 9th of Thermidor had put an end to the machinations of the demagogues in the armies. He was, indeed, for a time an object of suspicion to the new rulers, because he had had protectors among the former Commissioners, more especially the younger Robespierre. An investigation was instituted, but the unfounded nature of the charges was at once recognised, and an official testimonial was given him, that "the military and local knowledge of the said Bonaparte might be useful to the State." Soon afterwards the Committee of Public Safety was induced to make great reforms in the corps of officers, since the arbitrary and ill-regulated promotions made by the Conventional commissioners had swelled the number of generals and colonels in an incredible degree; and thus it happened that Bonaparte, too, lost his command, and was removed from active service on whole pay. He then went to Paris in order to take the necessary steps to obtain active employment. Being without protection or recommendations, it was long before he attained his object. His pay, in consequence of the depreciation of the *assignats*, was insufficient to protect him from disagreeable privations. But that which troubled him far more than the want of money was the consciousness of being condemned, in spite of the abundance of his thoughts, plans, and projects, to waste his days in barren inactivity. He besieged the members of the Committees, descanted to every Deputy, whom he could lay hold of for

a moment, on the infallible means of war and victory, became excited as he spoke, and assumed a lofty tone of assurance and authority. He was at that time only 26 years of age, his name was known to very few persons, and his appearance was strange but not prepossessing. His figure was small and slight, his face yellow, emaciated, and furrowed with deep lines; his hair hung down low over his forehead; he was awkward and taciturn, so that those gushes of eloquence were only the more astonishing. We may easily understand that some persons regarded him as a curious oddity, and others as an empty schemer. But those who understood the subject themselves, and listened to him attentively, were irresistibly attracted by his precise, correct, and comprehensive explanations; but unfortunately, Aubry, the man who was at that time the most important to him, as being the member of the Committee of Public Safety who was entrusted with military affairs, had no perception of the greatness which showed itself in such a curious form, and turned a deaf ear to all the prayers and proposals of the young officer. He spoke of great things, he told him, for which, however, his youth offered no guarantee. "One grows old very quickly on the field of battle," replied Bonaparte, "and that is where I come from." But Aubry still remained immovable. He offered the pertinacious officer the command of an infantry brigade in La Vendée, and Bonaparte, who had no inclination for civil war, and no desire to exchange from the artillery into another branch of the service, remained for the present in Paris, inactive but expectant. Day after day he kept drawing up fresh plans for a campaign in Italy. No sooner had peace been concluded with Spain, than he figured to himself the possibility of dealing momentous blows in the Apennines with the troops which had hitherto been employed in the Pyrenees [1]; and a few weeks afterwards the turn in affairs took place which

[1] *Correspondance de Napoléon*, vol. I, p. 75.

was decisive of his own fate and that of France. On the 15th of Thermidor a change took place in the *personale* of the Committee of Public Safety, and the direction of military affairs fell into the hands of Doulcet de Pontécoulant, who was himself a professional soldier, but was, on that very account—under the sense of the infinite responsibility which lay upon him—all the more inclined to look about him for efficient aid. Boissy d'Anglas directed his attention to the gifted Corsican officer, and the very first interview, on the 20th of August, was decisive for the relation between the new minister and Bonaparte. Doulcet recognised at once the rare genius of the young man. By the 24th a plan for the campaign, drawn up by Napoleon, was sent off to the head quarters of the Army of Italy.[1] And thus by a coincidence of very natural circumstances, Bonaparte, without either office or charge of any kind, suddenly found himself the virtual successor of Carnot. With burning zeal, indefatigable industry, and ubiquitous activity he applied himself to business. His stiff unbending nature was softened and cheered by the labours of his mighty task. "I see nothing about me," he wrote at this period to his brother Joseph, "but what is pleasant and full of hope."[2] A few days afterwards a fresh change occurred. Doulcet was succeeded by Letourneur, who, astonished at the curt and imperious tone of the young general, removed him from the *bureaux* of the Committee of Public Safety, and, when he once more declined a command in La Vendée, struck him out of the list of generals on active service. Bonaparte now recurred to an idea which he had formerly entertained, but had given up in consequence of an order which the Committee had issued on the recommendation of Doulcet. This idea was

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[1] *Mémoires de Doulcet de Pontécoulant*, I, 331. The account given in Barante, *Histoire de la Convention*, at the end of vol. V, which I have hitherto followed, must be rectified accordingly. — [2] *Correspondance de Napoléon*, I, 88.

to go to Constantinople in the name of the French government, and to organise the Turkish army for a bold attack on the Imperial courts. The Committee were delighted to rid themselves of this troublesome and ambitious officer, and acceded to the proposal, but were unable at the moment to raise the necessary money for the expedition. Meanwhile Vendémaire came on and with it the Parisian revolt. Barras, who with great self-sufficiency had undertaken the command against the Sections, but was anxious to find a trustworthy agent for carrying it out, enquired in the *bureaux* for an artillery officer who might be serviceable in a street fight. No one was better known there than Bonaparte. He sent for him in all haste, procured his nomination as second in command, and from that moment left all the arrangements to him. New life, spirit and intelligence, were suddenly inspired into the conduct of affairs. The young officer immediately applied to General Menou, in spite of all the attacks of the Left against the latter, for information respecting the position and strength of the enemy. His own resolution was taken at once, and without a moment's delay orders were sent in all directions to change the Tuileries in the course of a few hours into an impregnable camp. The cannon of the National guard were collected in a great park at Meudon; it was Bonaparte's first care to send off a strong squadron of cavalry thither and to carry off the artillery as speedily as possible to protect the Tuileries. He then distributed his 6,000 men behind the batteries at each entrance to the Tuileries, dispensed muskets and ammunition to the 700 Deputies as a reserve, and, leaving the city to itself for the moment, awaited the attack. On the other side General Danican took the same view of matters as Bonaparte; he pointed out to his friends that the favourable moment for a decisive blow had been neglected on the previous evening; that every attack on the now well ordered force of the Convention would have very little chance of success, considering the want of firmness in the civic troops; and that the only proper course

was to barricade all the streets to the Tuileries, and thereby force the enemy to disadvantageous engagements in separate divisions, or compel them by famine to still speedier submission. But the successes of the previous evening in the Section Lepelletier had blinded the more zealous of the leaders. They thought to gain their object by a rapid attack, and advanced with their forces on several points close to the outposts of the Republicans. The more considerate among them, however, still shrank from civil war, and succeeded in fact in bringing about a last attempt at negotiation, in which they offered reconciliation with the Convention, if the latter would disarm the battalion of Terrorists. Some of the Moderates in the Convention advised acceptance of these terms, but they were hissed by the armed patriots who filled the galleries, and angrily opposed by the majority of the Deputies. The Convention, they said, could not treat with rebels until they had laid down their arms. Barras, Tallien, and Louvet, pressed with lively impatience for a decision. Bonaparte saw, not without apprehension, that friendly conversations were taking place between citizens and soldiers. Suddenly shots were heard, fired by unknown hands—the cry of treachery was raised on both sides, and the fighting recommenced in a moment along the whole line. Whether Barras, or Bonaparte, or royalist agents had given orders to fire cannot now be discovered; one thing is certain, that the former, and they alone, had any urgent reason for doing so.

The long front of the Tuileries stretches from the bank of the river to the north. At this northern end, where the stately Rue Rivoli now lies, there were at that time a number of lofty houses in narrow streets, leading into the long Rue St. Honoré which runs parallel with the river. The citizens attacked the palace from this side as well as from the banks of the Seine. Their best men had taken post in the Rue St. Honoré, on the steps of the church of St. Roche, whence they exchanged shots with the patriot battalion through one

of those cross streets—shot down the gunners at their pieces, and repulsed with great bloodshed several attempts of the Republicans to break out of the narrow street. But on the river the citizens got into the murderous cross fire of the batteries, with which Bonaparte swept the whole length of the banks, and being thus intimidated they were quickly routed by a charge of some battalions of the line. This success raised the courage of the patriots, and lessened the confidence of the citizens in St. Honoré. Bonaparte then overpowered the position at the church of St. Roche by ordering a vigorous attack, sent forward his battery into the Rue St. Honoré, and swept the retreating citizens right and left from the street, by a rapid discharge of grape shot. All was now over; within a few minutes the National guards were completely broken, and dispersed with great loss: Bonaparte, who had hitherto manifested a merciless energy, now contented himself with accelerating the flight of his adversaries by a few blank shots, and then spent the rest of the night in occupying, without further resistance, all the important points of the city. The victory of the Convention, purchased by a few hundred lives on either side, was complete.

The revolutionary leaders had learned enough by experience not to sully their victory by bloody tribunals on a large scale. It was no longer their object, as it had been that of Billaud-Varennes and Robespierre, to remodel the whole population, but simply to maintain their own power in society as it now existed. The motion, therefore, of the more zealous Jacobins was negatived, and only the chiefs of the insurrection were brought before a court-martial, which pronounced several sentences of death, but gave most of the condemned opportunities of escape, and finally caused two persons only to be shot. The effect of the defeat was quickly obliterated in the city. There was, indeed, no more talk of refusing to elect the two-thirds; but when the election began on the 12th, the Electors only chose those members of the Con-

vention who scarcely made any secret of their leanings towards Royalty, and some of whom were even zealous royalists and aristocrats. But in other quaters the effect of the 13th of Vendémiaire was all the greater. In the country it destroyed at a single blow all the organisation of the conquered party, and more especially made a systematic cooperation for the elections impossible. And in the Convention, above all, an impulse was given to revolutionary opinions, such as had not been felt since the 9th of Thermidor, the consequences of which were to become equally fatal to France and Europe. The galleries, which were formerly filled by the *Jeunesse dorée*, were now exclusively occupied by the Terrorists of the Patriotic battalion. The common crowd of Deputies, without a will or an opinion of their own—that great mass of the Centre, which in the beginning of 1793 had been Girondist, and then for a time Dantonist; which had subsequently been at the call of Hébert, and then at the beck of Robespierre, which since the month of Thermidor had looked for their cue to Tallien, and since Germinal to Lanjuinais—that contemptible herd now crowded with the same timid servility round Barras, Siéyès, and Chénier, who thundered down all moderate opinions as atrocious royalism. Motion after motion was brought forward for the liberation of all the patriots who were still incarcerated; for restoration to their places of the arrested Deputies, and banishment of the returned *Émigrés* and non-juring priests. They talked of setting aside the previously nominated Electors, and holding a fresh election; in the Committees they even deliberated on the propriety of forming the Directory without waiting for the arrival of the new third. For a while the Moderate party offered an obstinate resistance, which was all the more successful because Tallien, Fréron and their friends, revolutionary as they were in their language, did not exactly wish to break with their former associates. But the movement entered a new phase, when, after the 12th of October, the result of the elections for the new

Legislative body became known. In three-fourths of the country the electors chose for the new third, decided aristocrats, constitutionalists, and royalists. As to the two-thirds of the Convention, the great majority of the Electors rejected, not only the Jacobins and Independents, but even the Thermidorians, and named, besides a number of colourless men of the Centre, scarcely any but Moderates. Their principal men stood so high in public favour that Lanjuinais was chosen in 73 Departments, Boissy d'Anglas in 72, Pelet in 71, Pontécoulant in 33, and Thibaudeau in 32. According to the decree of Fructidor, consequently, the Convention itself would have had to elect nearly three-hundred substitutes. But most of these Deputies had been able to give a decided answer, even during the election, so that the electors themselves were able to make another choice, and finally only 105 vacancies remained to be filled up by the Convention. As soon as the first symptoms of this change in the character of the elections began to show themselves, the Thermidorians demanded of their Moderate allies a promise of their support; and when the latter, who had long been alienated by Tallien's unsteady conduct, refused to bind themselves, it came to an open and bitter feud between the two factions.

During the legal proceedings which followed the 13th of Vendémiaire, the Police had succeeded in getting hold of a member of the Royalist agency, the Abbé Lemaitre, and confiscating his papers. Among these were notices of the probable sentiments of several Deputies. Lanjuinais, Boissy d'Anglas, Lesage and Larivière, were described as friends of the monarchy; but of Tallien it was said, that since the affair of Quiberon he was no longer to be trusted. Saladin, formerly a Girondist, and Rovere, a *quondam* Terrorist, appeared as actual secret leaders of the Sections; but no other definite expression or facts occurred. The *Comité de Sûreté générale*, however, on the 15th of October, made use of the opportunity to bring forward a report, in imitation

of Amar and St. Just, respecting the great conspiracy of the Foreign party, but without mentioning the names of the members in question. In consequence of this, Lemaitre was brought before a Court martial, and some voices demanded that the report should be printed for the instruction of the nation. Tallien, who two days before had left his seat on the Right, and taken up his old place on the top of the Mountain, rose to support the motion. He had just made peace with Siéyès and Barras, and after he had promised to assist the former in overthrowing the Moderate party, the Abbé in return had handed over to him from the minutes of the Committee of Public Safety, the proofs of his intrigues with the Royalists. He began his speech by declaring that the printing of the report was necessary, and that the Convention was bound to tell the country the whole truth; that the report, therefore, needed to be completed; the heads of the conspiracy, he said, must be named, and the people informed who they were who had so long crippled and retarded the contest against the Parisian electors. The galleries applauded furiously by loud clapping of hands. He proceeded to blame himself for having so long been silent, and when the Left cried out "name, name!" he declared that he was ready to do so, if the sitting were made a secret one. When the galleries had been cleared, amidst cries of "*Vive la République!*—Save the country!" he had the audacity to accuse the four Deputies, mentioned in Lemaitre's papers, of Royalist treason. Among these, as we have seen, was Lanjuinais, the same who had warned him of the discovery of his correspondence with Verona, with whose party he had held confidential meetings until the last few days, and with whom he had had a solemn reconciliation after a quarrel about the 13th of Vendémiaire. He had no proofs to bring forward in support of his charge; the majority of the Convention were cold, indignant and disgusted; the felon blow entirely missed its aim.

On the following day Louvet once more brought forward

the affair of the Foreign conspiracy, and demanded the arrest of Rovere and Saladin. They were both really implicated in the movement of the Sections, and no one ventured to defend them; Thibaudeau only observed that Saladin had just been named Deputy for Paris. The fury of the Left was only increased by this intelligence; all that they heard respecting the elections opened before them a future full of dangers; in spite of the degrees of Fructidor, in spite of the victory of Vendémiaire, they had still to fear the rise of a hostile Government. This question occupied all their thoughts, and guided all their efforts; this question included everything in their eyes—Country, Right, and Freedom. Bentabolle declared that the Revolution was lost, if the Convention did not forthwith name the Directory from among its own members; Dubois-Crancé expressed his lively apprehensions with regard to the future composition of the Council of Ancients. The party adopted the comprehensive plan of declaring the elections void, as the results of a treacherous royalism—thereby prolonging indefinitely the rule of the Convention—and then taking the necessary precaution to secure Jacobin elections. But if anything was to be effected it was high time to move, for the last day of the Convention, according to the existing laws, was fast approaching, and the first sitting of the two Councils was to take place on the 27th of October. Barras, therefore, who as chief of the armed force exercised at this time the highest influence, began to carry out the scheme on the 22nd of October, by delivering a thundering speech against the Foreign powers, the Royalists, the *Émigrés*, the treacherous General Menou, the horrible sentiments of the Parisian sections, and the French electors in general. "If you hand over the reins of the Revolution to suspicious hands," he said, "no one is secure for the future." "The safety of the Republic," cried Garnier, "is imperilled, if we do not understand how to use our victory during the four days which are still left to us." A regiment of cavalry was encamped in the gardens

of the Tuileries; all the entrances of the Palace were protected by cannon; the galleries were crowded with a Jacobin mob, who applauded every speech from the Mountain with loud shouts, and uttered the most violent threats against the members of the Right. The great mass of the Convention appeared intimidated, as formerly on the 2nd of June, and Tallien mounded the rostra to bring forward the decisive motion. He pointed out that in a few days the seats of the National representatives would be filled by the condemned Royalists, and that the latter, within three months, would complete the overthrow of the Constitution in a constitutional manner. This must be prevented by all possible means; and for this purpose he proposed the formation of a Commission of five members, who should propose on the following day the proper measures to be taken for the salvation of the Republic. Every one saw in this motion the commencement of a new political dictatorship; but the Assembly was so far cowed that they carried it almost without opposition, and named Tallien and four other violent Montagnards, members of the Commission. At the same time two royalist Deputies, Aubry and Chomont, were arrested, and General Menou brought before a court martial.

On the 23rd the Assembly expected the report of "The Five," and with it nothing less than a suspension of the new Constitution. The minds of the members were in a state of suspense and agitation; the great majority were adverse to the plans of Tallien, and full of secret wrath against the double renegade. But no one had any plan for meeting the evil. They were listening in oppressive silence to a speech on a new penal code, when Cavaignac, a member of the Left, interrupted it by presenting a petition against the Electoral college of Cahors. Thibaudeau then rose in a state of intense and violent emotion. "How is it," he cried, "that every chance person presumes to come here and disturb our labours? Has the Convention any right to sit in judgment on the Electoral colleges? It would be an

open breach of the Constitution. I know very well that it would not be the first; but I declare that I will rather die than idly look on at its destruction." These were brave words, such as had not been heard from the Right since Vendémiaire. The courage of the Assembly rose; and amidst the loud applauses of his own party, and the furious raging of the Mountain, Thibaudeau continued with increasing vehemence. "Yes, I will unmask to the whole country the new tyranny which is preparing for it. It is in vain to create a dictator, I defy your daggers; I will be the iron wall against which the conspiracy shall shiver to pieces." He then described the machinations of the Left, its revolt against the popular will as expressed in the Electoral assemblies, the insolence of the galleries, the contemptible vileness of political turn-coats; and when the Mountain interrupted him by deep murmurs, he cried "it is Tallien, Tallien, of whom I am speaking." The storm now broke loose from all sides; but Thibaudeau remained firm, lashed the moral baseness of his opponent, and his want of all political principle, with cutting strokes, and declared that no human power should compel him to remain a member of the Convention longer than the 27th of the month. He was greeted from all sides by cries of acquiescence; he had destroyed the plan of the Left, by openly putting it into words; he had relieved the Convention of the heavy apprehension which weighed it down, and inflicted a chastisement on Tallien which condemned the latter to eternal insignificance. The motion of The Five, that the Assembly should sit *en permanence* until the 27th, was negatived at once; on the following day Tallien spoke with suppressed fury of the necessity of cancelling the elections, but added that this wholesome measure had been rendered impossible by the sitting of yesterday. The Commission of Five contented themselves with proposing to exclude from public office the *Émigrés* and their relatives, as well as all those who, in the Assemblies of primary and secondary electors, had proposed illegal measures; they called

upon all citizens who were discontented with the Republic to emigrate, and proposed to carry out, without further delay, the laws against non-juring priests. The Convention was well satisfied to get off so cheaply, and sanctioned the decree. But they firmly rejected an attempt of the Left to restore the law of the *maximum*, and then forthwith dissolved the Commission of Five.

This was the last of the long series of party contests which had agitated the Convention during its three years' rule. It rejected the efforts of the Jacobins to reduce France to its former state of slavery, and confirmed the law which proclaimed the beginning of the Constitutional government for the 27th of October. But this was all that it could effect. Revolutionary views maintained the predominance which they had gained by the victory of Vendémiaire, both within and without the walls of the Assembly. In Paris the military force under the command of Barras ruled with absolute power; the days of popular Assemblies, and the *Jeunesse dorée*, were over for a long time to come. General Bonaparte, who, on the 13th, had been confirmed as second in command of the army of the Interior, put down all popular ebullitions with extreme severity, and acquired such a reputation for unsparing sternness, that the terror he inspired saved him from the necessity of applying actual force. As Representative of the Government he assumed a tone of stately superiority, such as had not been heard in Paris for ten years. He was not, however, in the habit of asking for instructions from his superiors, but consulted his own will, and was for the present allowed by Barras to take his own course. Consequently not a single expression of popular feeling reached the ear of the Convention which did not coincide with the wishes of the rulers. The Left was strengthened by a large accession of Thermidorians, and still more so by the dependence of what was called the "Swamp" or "Belly" of the Assembly—*i. e.* that large class of members who had *votes*, but no *opinions*. And thus, in the main,

the Independents had become masters of the position. They were, it is true, not exclusively so, or to the full extent of their wishes; but they could reckon on a majority with tolerable certainty if they only kept aloof from the old Jacobins, and now and then showed some degree of consideration to the leaders of the Moderate party. Under these circumstances, the Convention reached the close of its existence. In its last sitting, on the 26th of October, Baudin of the Ardennes proposed a general amnesty for political offences committed since 1791; all parties were in the main agreed, but both sides demanded that an exception should be made; the Right, in the case of the criminals of the 1st of Prairial, the Left, in that of the rebels of the 13th of Vendémiaire. No doubt could now remain as to the relative strength of parties; it was the Left who carried their point by a large majority. The President Genissieux thereupon declared the labours of the Convention at an end, and the final sitting closed.

On the 27th, the 379 Deputies who had been reelected by the people, together with the Representatives of the colonies, assembled to choose the 105 members who were still wanting to complete the Council of the 500. The list had been deliberated upon beforehand by the Committee of Public Safety; they had made some concessions to the Moderate party, but to compensate for this had proposed several decided Montagnards; and for the remaining vacancies they chose unimportant and servile men. The Independents were equally strengthened by the circumstance that more than a hundred of the new third had not yet arrived in Paris. The next operation was the division of the members present into the two Councils, which took place, according to the law, by lot. Out of the married or widowed Deputies who had attained their 48th year, 83 of the new third, and 167 of the Convention, were selected for the Council of Ancients; the rest of those present, and all who arrived afterwards, were to form the Council of 500. For the present, there-

fore, the old members of the Convention were five or six times as numerous as the new ones in the latter Council, and the men in power took advantage of this superiority, in the most unblushing manner, to secure the all important choice of the Directory. They had long resolved among themselves, that no one should enter the Directory who had not voted for the death of Louis XVI.; and after long deliberation fixed on the names of Siéyès, Rewbell, Barras, Laréveillère and Letourneur. They had a fair prospect of carrying this list in the Council of 500 in its present incomplete state. But they were doubtful of success in the Council of Ancients, the majority of which inclined to those who had really been elected by the popular voice—Lanjuinais, Boissy d'Anglas, Thibaudeau, and Cambacérès. As, however, the Constitution ordained that the Council of Ancients must choose the Directory from a list in which the 500 had inscribed ten Candidates for every place in the Directory, they resolved to set those five Independents at the head of the list, and to add to them 45 utterly impossible names. This dishonourable plan was carried out to the letter. The five seriously proposed Candidates received from 317 down to 207 votes each; then followed 44 *juges de paix*, farmers, burgomasters, inferior officials, officers of the National guard, or Gendarmerie, each of whom received from 170 to 140 votes, and lastly Cambacérès as former adherent of the Left, but who, in consequence of his reserve, and his close relations with Lanjuinais, had become an object of suspicion to that party. However angry the Council of Ancients might be at the force thus put upon them, they had no means of resistance, and the five Candidates of the Left were proclaimed as the future rulers of France. And when Siéyès from a love of learned ease, or mistrust of a Constitution which had not been drawn up by himself, declined the offered dignity, Carnot was chosen in his stead by an exactly similar manœuvre.

So much trouble did it cost the Convention, after three

years' of absolute power, to force a prolongation of their government on the French people. The greatest possible blunders on the part of the Royalists, a bloody street fight in Paris, the employment of all the juggling tricks of a complicated electoral system, had to cooperate before the late rulers could secure the continuance of their power, and with it impunity for themselves, and the duration of revolutionary interests. The future prospect was in no direction an encouraging one. To seek the heavy burden and responsibility of power it was necessary, like Barras, to forget everything but the splendid income of a Director, or, like the whole body of Independents, to see that the loss of power might lead to the loss of liberty and life. National bankruptcy was as good as proclaimed; the *assignats* had risen in number to 27 milliards, and sunk in value to ½ per cent, so that a twenty franc piece cost 4,200 francs in paper. The administration of the country was in a state of unfathomable disorder; the Conventional commissioners had never allowed the old authorities to get into full activity; the new ones were only just beginning to organise themselves, and it was impossible to foresee when their mechanism would be in a working condition. The agriculturists had made large incomes during the preceding summer; but we have seen on what an unnatural and illegal foundation this prosperity rested. It was certain that the material welfare of the peasants could never be secured without a firm confidence in the sale of the domains, the feelings of the rural population could never be calmed without a settlement of the ecclesiastical differences; and both these requisites were removed to a greater distance than ever by the fresh outburst of the fires of Revolution. Manufactures and inland trade were in no better state in the autumn of 1795, than in the beginning of the year, and the foreign trade was completely ruined; the Directory had therefore as good a prospect of riots among the workmen, and communistic conspiracies, as their predecessors. But the mass of the citizens

transferred all their dislike of the Convention to its successors under another name, and the laws against priests and *Émigrés* threw hundreds of thousands of families into an open state of hostility to the Government. The latter, therefore, had its sole effectual support in the army, and when, at this period, men talked of the end of the Revolution, the expression only meant that military rule was about to supplant that of the mob.

Such was the final account of the internal affairs of France left by the Convention. A no less gloomy picture meets our eyes when we turn to the affairs of Europe.

Since the victory of Quiberon, and the conclusion of the peace with Spain, French policy took a decided turn in the direction with which we have become familiar through the expressions of the Abbé Siéyès. The French government was not willing to be satisfied with an honourable and disinterested peace abroad for the sake of regaining peace and order at home. As, in the first half of the Revolutionary period, they had aimed at an unheard of ideal of popular liberty, so they now sought a superabundant measure of power and glory. The influence of Prussia—which was exerted in favour of general peace and the maintenance of the present state of things in Europe—fell in Paris to zero. Siéyès, who became more and more the guiding spirit of French diplomacy, soon convinced himself that Prussia would never agree to the alliance between France, Sweden and Poland, for the transformation of Europe, and therefore turned his whole attention to the counsels of Carletti, and a final arrangement with Austria. We know the obstacles which stood in the way of the completion of the treaty: the French rulers were convinced that Austria would sacrifice Belgium, and perhaps the left bank of the Rhine, to France, if the latter would make over Bavaria in return. And Siéyès, on his side, thought that it would be perfectly proper to cede Bavaria to the Emperor, if he would place the Breisgau and Milan as well as Belgium at the disposal of the French, so as not

to approach the French frontiers by the acquisition of Bavaria, but rather to remove further from them. It was well known, however, that Thugut would not, in that case, make up his mind to the loss of Milan; and it became evident to the French government that another passage of arms would be necessary before they could realise their programme. To husband their forces for this contest they made peace with Spain; and as soon as the ratifications had been exchanged with the latter country at the end of August, they sent orders to the Army of the Eastern Pyrenees to march with all speed to the Alps, and to give a decided turn to the war in Italy. At the same time Jourdan on the Lower Rhine, and Pichegru on the Upper Rhine, received instructions to cross the river in full force, to refresh their troops in the enemy's land, and compel the German states to surrender at discretion.

Among the latter there were but few who would not gladly have laid down their arms. The North Germans all declared themselves satisfied with the line of demarcation which protected them, and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel concluded a separate peace at Basle in August on the terms of the Prussian treaty. The South German sovereigns would gladly have followed his example, if they had had the means of removing the Imperial armies from their soil. But they vehemently urged the Court of Vienna to enter with all speed and earnestness into negotiations for a peace between the Republic and the Empire; and Francis II., for the sake of keeping up appearances, sent a communication to Copenhagen at the end of August, desiring that this neutral Government would signify in Paris his readiness to make peace. But not a word was said of positive proposals or overtures; and, as might easily have been foreseen, the Committee of Public Safety laid the unmeaning document aside for the future consideration of the Directory. The government in Vienna had expected nothing else; with them, as we know, the decisive question was, whether Russia would

afford the Emperor complete security against Prussia, and procure for him the desired territorial acquisitions. On these conditions they were ready to continue the war against France; otherwise they were determined to bring it to an end without delay. On the 9th of July Cobenzl wrote from St. Petersburg that the Russian government was ready to remove the Prussians from Cracow, by force of arms if necessary. When this news arrived in Vienna, the warlike preparations in Bohemia were in the main completed, the fortresses armed, and an army of about 80,000 men assembled on the northern frontiers of the Empire. Thugut, therefore, empowered Prince Reuss in Berlin, in concert with the Russian ambassador, to communicate the Partition treaty of the 3d of January to the Prussian Government. At the same time the first preliminary measures were taken for assuming the offensive on the Rhine, immediately after the subjection of Prussia. Clerfait had, during the last few months, held the chief command over all the Austrian troops and the forces of the Empire; but now a separate command was created for general Wurmser, who, though advanced in years, was still full of energy and warlike spirit. The commencement of operations was even now deferred until the Polish question should have been finally settled in Berlin.

On the 8th of August, the two ambassadors in Berlin demanded an audience with the ministry. The conference took place on the 9th, and the ambassadors, to the great astonishment of the Prussian ministers, laid before them the mutual declaration of the two Imperial courts respecting Poland, made on the 3rd of January. The impression was all the deeper because the ambassadors declined all discussion on the subject; instead of which they begged, in the name of their two Courts, that the negotiation might be carried on, as before, in St. Petersburg. Enraged at the duplicity of their august allies, alarmed at the peremptoriness of the Imperial tone, and for the moment not knowing what to do, the ministers made their report

with breathless haste to the King. Alvensleben, always penetrated by a sense of the exhaustion of the State, and as pusillanimous now, in presence of danger from the East, as six months before when the storm threatened him from the West, advised the King immediately and unconditionally to comply with the demands of the Imperial courts. Haugwitz who was, in the main, of the same opinion, preserved a greater degree of external calmness, and exhorted his sovereign to keep up at least the outward forms of an independent resolution. On the 15th, therefore, a letter from the King to the Empress was drawn up, in which he complained of the separate compact made between the Imperial courts in the midst of a common negotiation between the three Powers, but held out a prospect of his assent, in the interests of a general peace, if the Western portion of the Palatinate of Cracow—which, he said, was essential for the protection of the Silesian frontier—and a small tongue of land between the Bug and the Vistula, were ceded to him, that the sentinels on the Austrian frontier might not look directly into the gates of Warsaw.

All that the Prussian government heard, at this time, of the general state of affairs was calculated to strengthen their resolution to yield. Osterman told Count Tauenzien that the Polish matter must be brought to a conclusion: "if you attack Austria," he said, "we shall support her with all our power; and the Emperor will abandon the German Empire, make peace with France, and turn all his force against you." In Paris an agent of Hardenberg succeeded, soon afterwards, in getting hold of a memorial of the Abbé Sièyès, in which the plan of ceding Bavaria in return for Milan and Belgium was unfolded, and, at the same time, deep anger expressed against Prussia for using the Peace of Basle, not as a channel to an alliance with France, but solely as a transition to a state of neutrality.[1] Those words

[1] What Barante, *Convention*, VI, 438, communicates respecting Rewbell's

of Ostermann, therefore, were no empty threat; the way to a peace with France was in fact always open to the Emperor. Tauenzien, too, received continual reports of the serious and extensive preparations of Catharine. A levy of one per cent on the whole population was ordered for the whole extent of her vast Empire; large stores of provisions and ammunition were collected, and preliminary dispositions of troops were made in all directions. The aged Rumanzoff protected the frontiers by a strong division on the Dniester against possible attacks of the Turks; considerable bodies of infantry were on their march towards Poland, and it was already made known that, in case of a war with Prussia, Suworow and Repnin were to command in that country, and advance with all energy upon Silesia and East Prussia.

Under such threatening circumstances Tauenzien held the first general conference with Markoff and Cobenzl on the 3rd of September. But no sooner had he brought forward the very modest proposals of his sovereign, than Cobenzl declined to proceed, and left the room. The Russians expressed regret at the occurrence, but at the same time declared that they were bound, that this was the last consultation, and that Prussia must give way. Tauenzien replied, that in order to prove Prussia's love of peace he would go beyond his instructions, and give up his claim to the city of Cracow, and sign the treaty in the hope of afterwards obtaining the sanction of his sovereign. Markoff promised to support this proposal with Count Cobenzl, but informed Tauenzien, two days afterwards, that Austria adhered to the declaration of the 3rd of January. On the 11th, however, he sent word to Berlin, that he had succeeded in persuading Austria to give up the tongue of land between

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conferences with Hardenberg is not confirmed by the despatches of the latter. Hardenberg was not able to learn what Rewbell wanted in Basle; the latter only told him that France could have no confidence in Prussia's undecided attitude.

the Bug and the Vistula to Prussia, but that he could obtain no concession with respect to Cracow, and earnestly begged for the King's assent. "Then," cried Alvensleben, "we would rather return to our frontiers of 1793, protest against any partition, wait for the result of the ferment in Poland, and protect ourselves by an alliance with France." The aged Finkenstein, however, thought that to get mixed up with France in such a manner would be the greatest possible misfortune, and the King agreed with him. He sent instructions to Tauenzien to rest satisfied with a slight rectification of the Silesian frontier; and to declare on the part of Prussia, that she was prepared in all other respects to maintain the mutual guarantee of the Polish acquisitions, in accordance with the February treaty; but that she would under no circumstances undertake to break the peace of Basle.

At the same time the Triple-alliance between Russia, England, and Austria was formed, accompanied by an express promise of Russia to furnish a body of troops for the French war, which Austria, on her part, engaged to prosecute with all her power. The alliance was of universal application, and made no exception in favour of any adversary who might arise against any one of the contracting Powers. It contained no limitation of time, and excluded all partial or separate negotiations. Backed by such a document as this, Markoff and Cobenzl were the less inclined to make any concessions to Prussia. On the 19th of October Tauenzien held his last negotiation. When he spoke of the rectification of the Silesian borders, the Russians at last consented to a mixed Commission for the regulation of the disputed line of demarcation; in return for which he was obliged to content himself, in regard to the Polish guarantee, with a verbal promise that it should in no case interfere with the peaceful relations between France and Prussia. He made up his mind to sign, with a heavy heart, well knowing that the King would ratify the treaty, but would

visit him, the unhappy negotiator, with his supreme displeasure. The Polish question, which had cleft Germany in twain, and opened a broad path of victory to France, was settled at last. During these negotiations the autumn campaign had commenced in the Alps and on the Rhine.

At that time the Austrians and the troops of the Empire, about 180,000 strong, formed two armies, one of which, under General Clerfait, occupied the right bank of the Rhine, from Düsseldorf to Philippsburg; the other, under General Wurmser, from Philippsburg to Basle. On the 7th of September, three divisions of Jourdan's army crossed the river some leagues below Düsseldorf, and drove the most northerly division of the Austrians as far as the Sieg; whereupon the Palatinate Minister Hompesch, with disgraceful cowardice, surrendered Düsseldorf; the French centre then crossed over to the right bank at Cologne, and compelled the Austrians to a further retreat beyond the Lahn. Then the last divisions of the enemy passed over the river at Neuwied, and Jourdan, who was leading 70,000 men towards the Lahn, overpowered the newly occupied position of the Austrians beyond that river, in a sharp action near Diez; so that Clerfait was compelled to withdraw his columns, with all speed, to the Main. He hastened his retreat all the more, because just at this time General Pichegru crossed the Rhine with three divisions at Manheim, and the Minister Oberndorf, in accordance with secret instructions from his weak Government,[1] delivered up the fortress to the enemy with the same precipitation as his colleague had shown at Düsseldorf. At Heidelberg, about 14 miles from Manheim, the Austrians had their chief magazine and their principal depots, which after the fall of Manheim were only protected by a weak division of 9 battalions under General Quasdanowich. If

[1] The existence of these instructions was afterwards denied, but is only too certain. Oberndorf was to purchase friendly treatment of the country by this capitulation.

Pichegru were to occupy this important point without delay, there would then be no further communication through the valley of the Rhine, between Wurmser's army at Freiburg and Clerfait's legions on the Main. To hinder this Clerfait hastened back across the Main, took post at Arheiligen, Babenhausen, and Aschaffenburg, and sent off some reinforcements with all speed to Heidelberg. And, in fact, General Quasdanowich succeeded in a brilliant engagement, on the 29th, in driving two French divisions under Dufour from the neighbourhood of Heidelberg, and thereby enabled General Wurmser to bring up his forces for the protection of the threatened point.

Yet the successes of the French in these first weeks were by no means inconsiderable. They had taken two important fortresses on the right bank, and occupied the whole country between the Rhine, the Main, and the Prussian line of demarcation. Great were the triumph and arrogance of the Rulers in Paris! On the 24th of September, the Committee of Public Safety sent off a plan of operations to Jourdan and Pichegru, the object of which was to surround both the Austrian armies between the Main, the Rhine, and the Neckar, and utterly annihilate them. On the same day they laid a proposal before the Convention to settle the political system of the Republic in the face of all Europe, by incorporating Belgium and Liège—"in accordance with the wishes of all their inhabitants"—with the French territory. This was just at the time when, in consequence of the contest with the Parisian sections, the Convention was falling more and more into dependence on the Left. It was in vain that members of the Moderate party—Lanjuinais, Lesage, and Harmand—warned them against an aggrandizement which must lead to perpetual war with all Europe. After a long discussion, in which the Left branded every word in favour of peace as treason to the country, the incorporation was decreed on the 1st of October, in the midst of the preparations for the struggle of the 13th

of Vendémiaire. In order to carry out the system of aggrandizement still further, Boissy d'Anglas and Siéyès, a few days before the decree of incorporation, had sent Theremin—formerly a Prussian, now a French official—to Basle to Baron Degelman, an Austrian diplomatist, in order that the latter might communicate to Thugut the readiness of the Republic to abandon Bavaria to the Emperor, if he would cede Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine to France.[1] Siéyès may have thought that he was taking a great step to meet the views of the Moderate party.

This time, however, Nemesis followed close upon the heels of overweening pride. After Wurmser had arrived in Heidelberg, Clerfait once more turned against Jourdan, who in the meantime had taken up a position on the Main from its mouth, near Castel, to the Nidda. Clerfait resolved to roll up the French line by attacking its left flank. For this purpose he sent several of his divisions across to the north of the Main to Aschaffenburg and Offenbach, in order to threaten the extreme left of the French from that side; and then to advance upon their rear through the Taunus hills. By this arrangement Jourdan found himself placed in so critical a position, that after failing in an attack on the Imperial forces on the Nidda, he commenced his retreat towards the Lahn, in three columns. Though the Austrians pursued him with only a weak advanced guard, the enemy suffered considerable loss, and reached the left bank of the Rhine at last in very bad plight. The French troops, who were half starved and ragged before the beginning of the campaign, had no sooner reached the right bank, than they threw themselves with savage greediness upon the unhappy land, indulging every fierce desire, driving the inhabitants to desperation by every kind of ill-treatment, and forfeiting all steadiness and military discipline. The regiments could only be kept

[1] Theremin's Report in the Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Paris

together as long as victory was on their side; at the first step in retreat the whole army fell into disorder; entire companies left their ranks in order to flee the faster, and to rob and burn as they hurried by. But the patience of the people was at an end; the peasants rose in the Taunus and Westerwald, and took bloody vengeance on their tormentors, with axe and scythe. A number of French marauders were slain, or delivered up as prisoners to the Austrians. By the end of the month the Austrians had reoccupied the whole district along the Rhine as far as the Sieg.

Clerfait, meanwhile, had halted betimes, and in the conviction that Jourdan was harmless for a long time to come, had turned with quick resolution against another enemy. After Pichegru had occupied Manheim with three of his divisions, the rest of the French army had been posted in two equally strong bodies—four divisions between Strasburg and Hüningen, and four for the observation and assault of Mayence. In order, to form a complete blockade of this place on the left bank of the Rhine, the French had formed a chain of field fortresses in a wide circuit round the place, the redoubts of which were armed with more than 150 guns, and manned with 31,000 troops. Clerfait now conceived the idea of strengthening the garrison by a few of his divisions, and then, by an unexpected and vigorous onslaught, tearing asunder the chain of the enemy's lines. This bold enterprise was executed with equal energy and success. On the 28th of October, the Austrian columns defiled over the bridge into the city, without the French having had the slightest suspicion of their approach. Early in the morning of the following day they proceeded to the attack in deep silence, favoured by a strong west wind, which concealed from the enemy the noise of the nocturnal march. They first made a feigned attack on the left wing of the enemy's line, but immediately afterwards the real storm broke on the extreme right wing, and one position after another was overpowered in quick succession. By midday

all was over; 138 guns and 1,700 prisoners remained in the hands of the Austrians; the enemy was completely dispersed, and his divisions scattered in wild flight to the four winds. It was not until Pichegru himself came in all haste from the Upper Rhine with considerable reinforcements, that the French succeeded in taking up a strong position behind the Pfriem, on a line running from Worms and Pfeddersheim to the Donnersberg.

While Clerfait by such vigorous blows was restoring the honour of the German arms, and diffusing fresh courage far and wide through the Empire, Wurmser, who was higher up the river, had not been idle. On the 17th and 18th of October, he fell upon the French troops at Manheim, and by a successful engagement drove them into the fortress. The whole southern bank of the Neckar was thereby cleared of the enemy. On the 29th, the same day on which Clerfait forced the lines of Mayence, Wurmser made himself master of the Galgenberg, the last position of the French before Manheim, on the right bank of the Neckar. To besiege the town with success, however, it was essential to complete the blockade on the side of the left bank of the Rhine, and, to this end, to drive Pichegru out of his position on the Pfriem. Accordingly Clerfait, strengthened by 19 battalions of Wurmser's army, advanced towards the Pfriem on the 10th of November; and although, contrary to his custom, he showed some degree of caution and timidity, he obtained a complete success after a four days' struggle, and compelled the French to retreat behind the Queich and the walls of Landau. By this means the garrison of Manheim was completely isolated, and on the 22nd of November the fortress was compelled to capitulate. In vain had Jourdan twice attempted with his shattered regiments to force his way through the Hundsrück past Kreuznach into the Palatinate; on both occasions he was driven back by General Wartensleben, according to Clerfait's orders. After the fall of Manheim, Wurmser was able single-handed to keep the

French army of the Rhine in check, and Clerfait's whole force was thereby rendered disposable against Jourdan; the latter was obliged entirely to evacuate the Hundsrück, which, together with the greater portion of the Palatinate on the left bank of the Rhine, was now in German hands. The double attack, by which the Convention had intended to seal their military superiority on German ground, had completely failed; and there now arrived from Vienna a polite but formal answer to Theremin's overtures, to the effect that the Imperial government did not consider the present juncture adapted to their consideration. [1]

In Italy the Committee of Public Safety, on the 31st of August, had ordered the separation of the so-called Italian army in the Genoese Riviera, from the army of the Alps in Savoy, and had placed the latter under the command of General Kellerman, and the former under that of General Scherer, who had hitherto commanded in the Eastern Pyrenees. In the beginning of September the first reinforcements arrived from the Spanish theatre of war; but here, too, everything was lacking — money, clothes, provisions, and ammunition. To make the matter worse, the ferment in the southern Departments of France detained large bodies of troops in the country, and General Scherer though full of patriotic zeal, was poor in military genius. The Committee, therefore, decreed the sending of 10,000 men of the Rhine army to Italy; but it was November before these reinforcements arrived in the Riviera; and Scherer, who had now 50,000 men, decided on commencing operations. The allied Austro-Sards, now commanded by Count Wallis and General Colli, lay meanwhile on the heights of the Apennines, as inactive as the enemy, without proper means of forming a camp, or sufficient supplies, exposed to the influences of changeable, and at last severe, weather, so that they suffered both physically and morally, and were heartily weary of a

[1] Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in Paris.

fruitless war. On the 23rd of November, the French attacked their position on all points. The Piedmontese, who formed the left wing of the allied army, held their ground against all the efforts of Serrurier; but Massena drove the Austrians in the centre out of Bardinetto, and Augereau also succeeded in totally defeating the Austrian right wing at Loano. After a loss of more than 4,000 men, Wallis then evacuated the mountains, on the 24th, to take up a new position on their northern declivity near Acqui, Dego, and Millesimo. The French were masters of the Riviera, and of the passes leading to Piedmont, and, therefore, in a position to open the next campaign by a great offensive movement in Upper Italy, according to the plans of Bonaparte.

Such was the present state of the war, the completion of which the Convention left to the new constitutional government. The French arms had made no farther progress than a year before: nay, they had even lost a considerable district on the Upper Rhine; while in Italy they had just gained enough by the victory of Loano to enable them to begin the real contest. In spite of these vicissitudes of fortune, however, the character and result of the war were no longer doubtful. After the defeat of the Moderate party in Paris, and after the diplomatic humiliation of Prussia, it was certain that the whole of Europe was about to undergo a military and revolutionary transformation. The Governments in Paris, Vienna, and St. Petersburg, however different in their origin and form; were in this respect entirely similar. Between Austria and France it was no longer a question of *ancien régime*, or modern innovation; the contests of 1796 were to be carried on simply to settle the question whether Austria should receive a few leagues of land more or less in the north or south of the Alps. That the Constitution of the Roman Empire must collapse, whether by the incorporation of Bavaria, or the annexation of the left bank of the Rhine, or both, gave the Emperor of the German nation as little concern as the Directory of the French

Republic. It seemed for the future, then, to depend on the length of life which Providence might grant to the Empress Catharine, whether the wild whirlpool should seize the Turkish provinces also; whether all the European countries on the East of the Vistula should be subjected to Russia, and all on the West of the Rhine should fall beneath the power of France; and whether, perhaps, after an entire dismemberment of Prussia, the remnant of Germany might become a Province of the House of Lorraine. Such were the circumstances and prospects of Europe at the end of the year 1795; no one had the least presentiment of the mighty power which in a few months would assume the guidance of affairs, change all the details of existing plans, and incalculably accelerate the general development of the military revolution.

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